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HEY THERE, ALL YOU BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE — FANCY A DOBBER DATE?

IN HIS FIRST INSTALMENT, THE DOBBER TRIES SOME TASTY TREATS WITH THE SUGAR PLUM FAIRY PAGE 23

Is it your job to apologize? We think so

Federal Industry Minister James Moore says sorry for his 'Is it my job to feed my neighbour's child? I don't think so' comments PAGE 12

Fake signer took part in murder mob, friends say

They say phony interpreter at Mandela memorial ruled not mentally fit for a trial PAGE 15

A year after the rape that appalled India

Nation reflects on what was lost, what has changed and what still must change on the first anniversary of fatal gang rape on a bus PAGE 10

NEWS WORTH SHARING.

Want to see our books? Pay up: Toronto Hydro

Nearly $5,000. Utility says it will be arduous to dredge up expenses of senior executives

The public has no easy way to find out how much top Toronto Hydro executives bill for expenses or what those expenses are, a Torstar News Service investigation shows.

Torstar asked Toronto Hydro for copies of all expense accounts, including receipts, submitted by the corporation's management team and board of directors between January 2011 and October 2013.

The request, made through freedom-of-information legislation, comes in the wake of a damning report by auditor general Bonnie Lysyk last week that found rampant nepotism and "very generous" wages and benefits at Ontario Power Generation, another publicly owned former Ontario Hydro utility.

Toronto Hydro said it would take more than a week to search for the expense-account records, followed by another two weeks of "processing" and is asking Torstar to pay close to $5,000 before handing them over.

Coun. Shelley Carroll, who sits on Toronto Hydro's board of directors, called the fee request "unacceptable."

"If the guy who lives across the street from me goes down (to Toronto Hydro) and says, 'I want to see the expenses,' they can't honestly think they'd get away with saying to John Q. Public, 'That will be $5,000,'" Carroll said.

Torstar has appealed Toronto Hydro's fee request to the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario, arguing that the release of this information is in the public interest.

While it is still early in the appeal process, Suzanne Tardif, the mediator at the Information and Privacy Commission dealing with Torstar's complaint, wondered why Toronto Hydro's expense-account information is not more readily available.

Toronto Hydro is the largest municipal electricity distributor in Canada and is responsible for distributing 19 per cent of Ontario's electricity. It is solely owned by the City of Toronto.

Toronto Hydro spokesperson Tanya Bruckmueller said Monday that the corporation's operations are "subject to extensive public scrutiny."

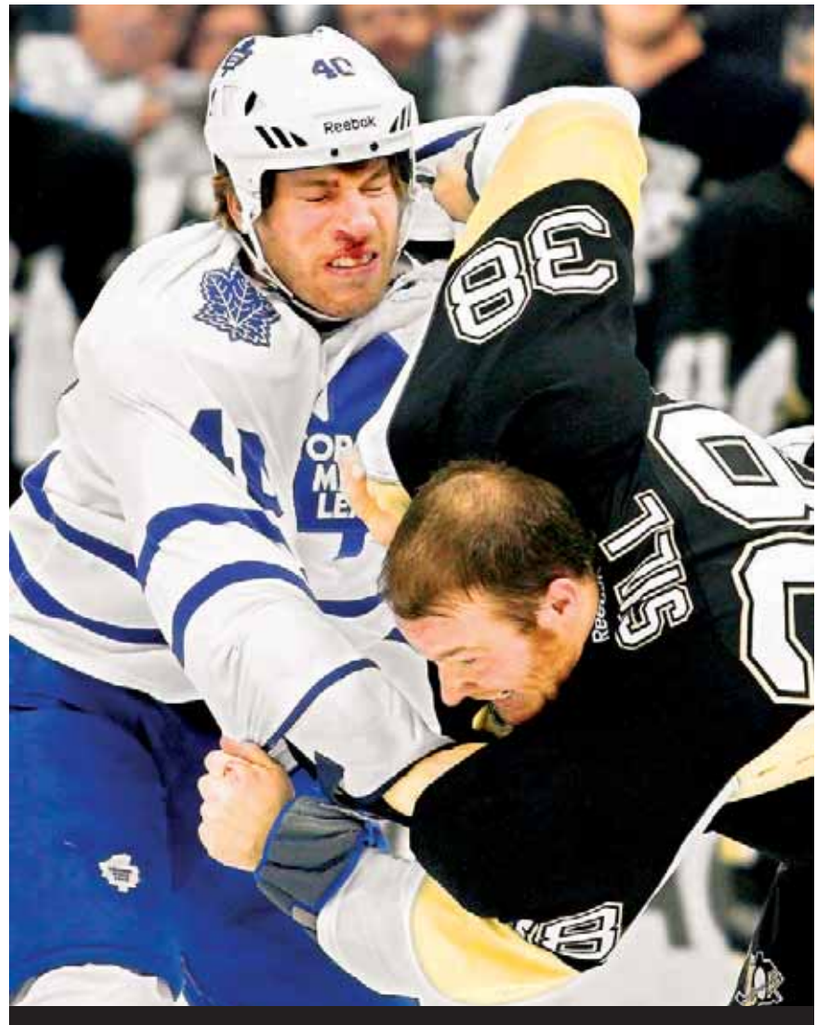
"Our salary, capital and operating budgets are submitted to the Ontario Energy Board where they are reviewed in an open and public process. These annual submissions to the OEB involve the filing of thousands of pages of financial, engineering and operational information that is carefully considered by all of the parties," she said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Why ask?

Torstar News Service is seeking the expense-account information for Toronto Hydro's 12 board members, nine vice-presidents and CEO as part of its ongoing investigation of transparency and accountability at the corporation.

- Unlike Toronto Hydro, Hydro One and Ontario Power Generation list on their websites all travel, meal and hospitality expenses incurred by senior executives and board members.



PUNCHED OUT BY PENS

Troy Bodie of the Leafs and Zach Sill of the Penguins throw some big punches during the game at the Consol Energy Center on Monday in Pittsburgh. The Leafs lost a tight one, as Sydney Crosby scored the winner in the 3-1 loss. Go to metronews.ca for the full story. JUSTIN K. ALLER/GETTY IMAGES

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Healthy Smiles

More kids getting free dental care

An additional 70,000 low-income Ontario children will be eligible for free dental care under a new streamlined program to be rolled out over the next 18 months, Health Minister Deb Matthews said Monday.

Families with one child under 18 with net annual incomes of up to $21,513 will be eligible for the province's Healthy Smiles program starting next April. The income cap rises by $1,500 for each additional child.

By August 2015, the province's six dental programs serving low-income and disabled children will be merged into a single service to improve administration and access, Matthews told reporters.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

CPP alternative

Ontario going it alone on pensions

Ontario is vowing to set up its own pension plan after federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty ruled out any enhancements to benefits under the Canada Pension Plan.

Accusing the federal Conservatives of ragging the puck, Finance Minister Charles Sousa told reporters Monday that the provincial government intends to develop a made-in-Ontario solution to increase benefits to pensioners.

Charles Sousa
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Protesters from Disarm the Police, denouncing the shooting by officers of a man in the Queen subway station, burn an effigy of a pig. DAVID COOPER/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Mental health shouldn't sway police actions: Cop

Threat assessment. Perpetrators' state of mind should not factor into use-of-force decisions, inquest told

Quoted

"(Police) training has to be based on a predictable safe outcome." Deputy Chief Michael Federico

Toronto's front-line police officers should not have to consider the mental state of people who pose lethal danger, a high-ranking cop told a coroner's inquest on Monday.

Deputy Chief Michael Federico argued that when someone is deemed able to cause serious injury or death, an officer's priority is to put an end to that situation, not make diagnoses of mental health.

"Those who are carrying a lethal weapon and demonstrate their intention to use it are lethal threats" regardless of their clarity of mind, Federico said.

"Officers have to deal with the behaviour, distinct from what motivates that behaviour."

The inquest is examining police use-of-force practices and how they relate to people with mental-health issues, focusing on three incidents since 2010 where Toronto police shot and killed mentally ill people who were carrying sharp objects.

Federico, who sits on several panels that study and recommend police practices, also told the inquest that Toronto police have interactions with at least 19,000 "emotionally disturbed persons" (EDPs) every year. Of those, he said "one or two" result in death or serious injury with someone who has a confirmed mental illness.

Lawyer Peter Rosenthal, who represents the family of one of the people killed by police, repeatedly asked Federico to discuss why officers aren't trained to use softer verbal cues when dealing with EDPs. They currently rely on sharp phrases such as "Don't move!"

Rosenthal said previous testimony suggested deaths could be avoided if police used less commanding language when dealing with people experiencing mental-health issues.

Federico responded that police are trained to verbally engage with people in such instances, and are encouraged to maintain communication.

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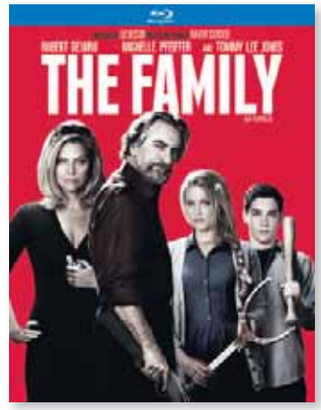

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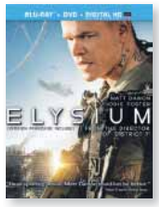

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Most Canadians want door-to-door mail: Poll

Would you rather walk, or ...? Approval skews along income lines

A Forum Research Inc. opinion survey says most Canadians don't support Canada Post's plan to kill home delivery.

Among 1,634 voters polled in a random sampling, close to six in 10 (58 per cent) don't approve of last week's announcement by the federal agency that called for the end of door-to-door delivery within five years.

Overall, only one-third approve of the move, while about 10 per cent have no opinion.

Two-thirds of respondents (67 per cent) think it unreasonable for a stamp to cost $1.

The poll was conducted on Dec. 12 and 13. Results based on the total sample are considered accurate +/- 2 per cent, 19 times out of 20.

"Although Canadians are attached to their mail delivery, they do not see a dollar a letter as a fair price to pay for it, when it's not even being delivered to their doors. Even a good portion of those who don't get their mail delivered now think this is a bad idea" said Forum Research president Lorne Bozinoff in a statement.

Five-point plan

Canada Post's plan is to replace urban door-to-door delivery with community mailboxes. The overhaul includes eliminating up to 8,000 jobs in five years.

The survey found that wealthier Canadians — who tend to vote Tory — don't overwhelming disapprove of cancelling door-to-door delivery. For example 48 per cent of respondents with household incomes between $100,000 to $250,000 a year approve of the move, while 45 per cent disapproved.

Meanwhile, among lower income respondents, those with household incomes of less than $20,000 a year, most — 68 per cent — disapprove of cancelling door-to-door delivery. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Letter carrier Debbie Aubert delivers mail in Hamilton. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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T.O. cops facing lawsuit for racial profiling

Four black Toronto teenagers who were stopped by police and thrown in jail two years ago have filed a lawsuit against the officers alleging they were targeted because of their race.

The suit alleges the officers had no reasonable or probable grounds to believe Buraa Abdulkadir, Burhan Abdulkadir, Yohannes Brhanu and Muathe Mahdi had committed an offence on Nov. 21, 2011.

A statement of claim alleges the two officers who stopped the teens "acted with improper motives including racial bias, malice and bad faith" and used excessive force against Buraa Abdulkadir.

It alleges two more officers committed assault and battery when they strip searched Abdulkadir without his consent, and accuses the booking sergeant of negligence.

The TPS Board is also named in the suit, accused of allowing a program that has allegedly led to widespread harassment of young black males.

None of the allegations have been proven in court, and neither the officers nor the board have filed a statement of defence. A spokeswoman declined to comment, saying the matter is before the court.

The plaintiffs, who were all 15- and 16-year-old high-school students at the time, initially faced several charges that were eventually withdrawn. Each is seeking $100,000 in damages.

The four had just left the apartment where the Abdulkadir brothers lived when they were stopped by constables Adam Lourenco and Sharnal Pais, the document alleges. The teens were asked to show ID, but said they didn't have any with them and offered to have the brothers' mother vouch for them, it says. After being told he wasn't under arrest, Buraa Abdulkadir tried to leave, having recently learned that he didn't have to identify himself to police without cause, the suit says. The statement alleges Lourenco then pushed Abdulkadir and punched him in the abdomen and head. It says the officer also drew his gun and threatened to shoot the other teens when they asked what their friend had done wrong.

Statement of claim

"The actions of PC Lourenco and PC Pais were high-handed, malicious, arbitrary and highly reprehensible misconduct ..."

All four were handcuffed and searched without consent before they were taken to jail, the document says.

They were not, however, told the reason for their arrest nor that they had the right to speak to a lawyer, the suit alleges. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Tyler Schwartz in his Toronto office with some of his leg lamps. Schwartz has written a book called A Christmas Story Treasury. He is an expert on the seasonal film and also has a company called Retro Festive, which sells about 1,000 leg lamps each year across Canada. COLIN MCCONNELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

One fan makes a business out of Christmas classic

Retro Festive. Love for the film A Christmas Story pays dividends

STEVE GOW
toronto@metronews.ca

Oakville's Tyler Schwartz is such a big fan of the classic holiday movie A Christmas Story, he started a business about it.

Owner of Retro Festive — perhaps the nation's only pop culture Christmas store — Schwartz showcases some of the most recognizable goods associated with the 30-year-old film featuring Ralphie and his quest for a Red Ryder B.B. gun.

"The leg lamps are, by far, our biggest sellers," said Schwartz of the film's most signature item. "It's quite the phenomena, especially for such a modest movie that people didn't think too much of at first, but now it's become a huge industry."

Featuring all sorts of pop culture paraphernalia, Schwartz's store actually began in earnest after he read about the purchase of the film's iconic house in Cleveland. That event sent the would-be entrepreneur on an expedition to uncover the holiday favourite's shooting locations. Shortly after the eye-opening road trip that unveiled a swelling fan base, he and his wife Jordie began an online business selling items related to A Christmas Story.

Quoted

"People like it because it's kind of a bit crass and unexpected and then at the end it sort of tugs at the heartstrings.... That's what makes it a good movie but what made it so successful over the years is that it just played so continuously on television."

Tyler Schwartz, on the movie A Christmas Story

"What we found was there are certainly a lot of people who love A Christmas Story and the leg lamps but there was just as many people (wanting items from other) movies and pop culture Christmas stuff," said Schwartz.

As such, the budding entrepreneur began peddling props from other holiday films and, due to demand, eventually opened his Oakville showroom. "I'm always surprised how far people come to see it."

Schwartz's passion for the film doesn't end with Retro Festive either. With the movie currently marking its 30th anniversary this year, Schwartz was honoured to be singled out by a publisher to author the official A Christmas Story Treasury — a new interactive book probing the classic film's history and Canadian heritage.

"I really wanted to take the opportunity and try and tell Canadians and Americans about the Canadianism of it all," said Schwartz of his anniversary guide, now available in bookshops.

"A lot of people don't realize (the movie) and all these world-famous scenes — like the kid getting his tongue stuck to the pole — it was shot in our own backyard in St. Catharines and most people don't even know it."

At a glance

Retro Festive's most unique items:

- Leg lamp replicas (A Christmas Story)
- Moose mugs (National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation)
- Mini Charlie Brown tree (A Charlie Brown Christmas)
- Chewbacca plush stocking (Star Wars: The Holiday Special)
- Festivus pole and base kit (Seinfeld)

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Fast-food giants tackling drive-thru gridlock

Slowdown. Restaurant chains scramble to shave seconds off wait times while improving order accuracy

The familiar old drive-thru — where up to 70 per cent of the industry's business is now done — is definitely slowing down, with longer menus, more customized items and the increasing consumer appetite to eat in cars.

Twitter complaints and even reports of "drive-thru rage" have the fast-food giants scrambling to shave precious seconds off wait times while dealing with sliding order accuracy.

On average, customers in 2013 spent roughly three minutes (180 seconds) from order to pickup — about eight seconds longer than last year, according to QSR magazine's annual drive-thru performance study.

That's a far cry from the "service under a minute" mantra of the old days.

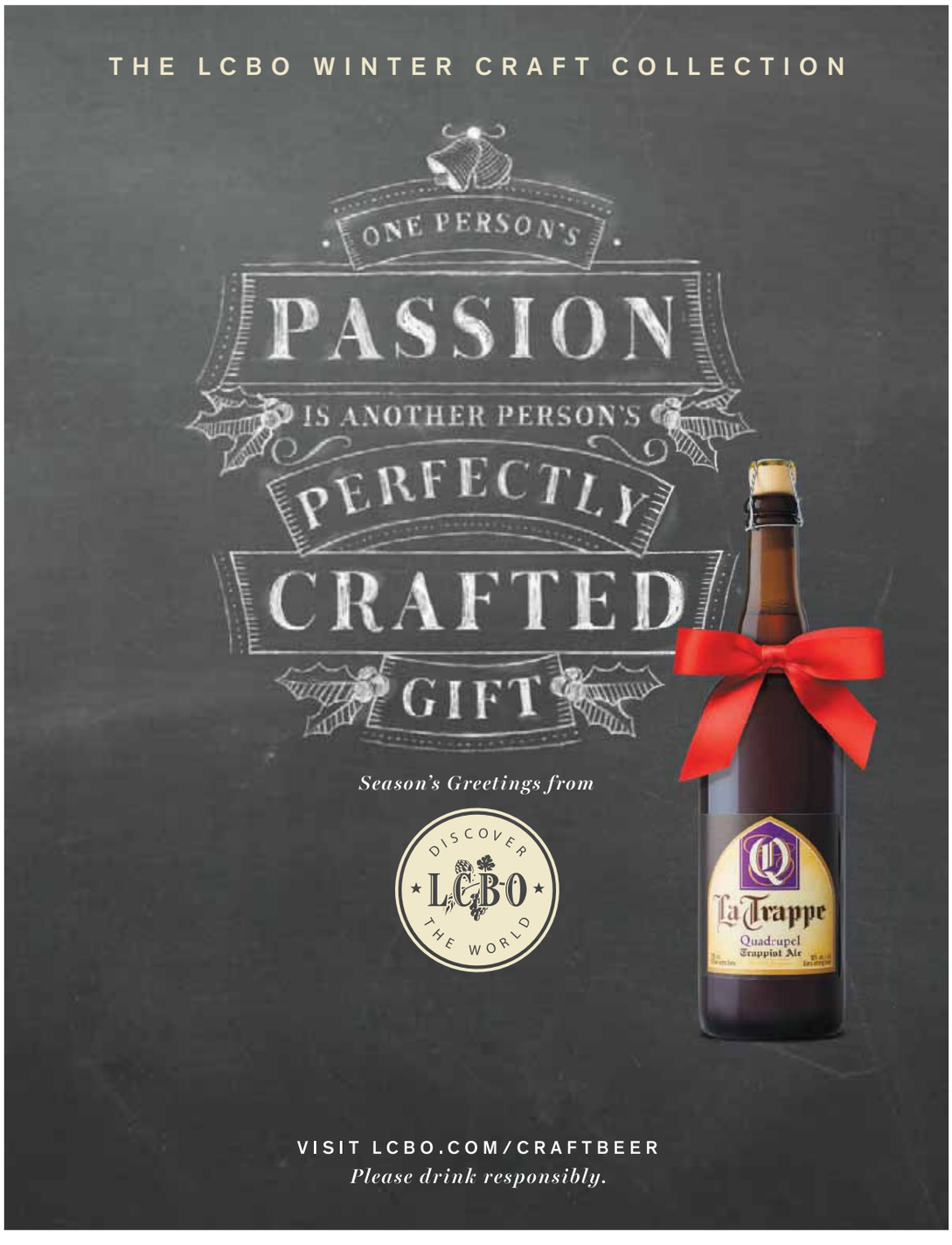
Some restaurant chains are testing mobile ordering systems and reconfiguring the drive-thru into dual lanes for pickup at both the driver and passenger sides.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Making fast food faster

- McDonalds' "Fast Forward" drive-thru will use a third pickup window for those with more customized orders to help reduce the bottleneck.
- Wendy's is testing a new service, iDriveThru, that reads customers' E-ZPass electronic toll collection tags to instantly pay for meals at the drive-thru.
- And Tim Hortons, where drive-thru lineups are a chronic headache, has begun to install simplified menus with pictures and double lanes.

A drive-thru at a McDonald's in Toronto. ANDREW FRANCIS WALLACE/ TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



Contraband. Smokes smuggling ring snuffed

Authorities say a large contraband tobacco smuggling and trafficking operation has been dismantled in southwestern Ontario.

It's alleged the ring was responsible for smuggling more than 66 tonnes of un-stamped water pipe tobacco into Canada since 2010.

Nine people are facing charges following a joint investigation by Hamilton and Niagara area RCMP, the Canada Border Services Agency and the Ontario Ministry of Finance.

Police say the investigation began in 2011 into a local individual suspected of smuggling un-stamped water pipe tobacco for local distribution.

But as the investigation went on, they say a larger organization was uncovered that reached beyond the Hamilton area.

It's alleged the network used sophisticated methods to conceal their smuggled products and hide their operation. Police say the volume of tobacco smuggled means millions of dollars in duties and taxes were not paid.

During the investigation, authorities say border officers made two large seizures of flavoured tobacco: one at the Peace Bridge in July 2011, in which 1,440 kilograms of flavoured tobacco were seized, and another at the Queenston Bridge in October 2011, when a similar amount was seized.

"Contraband tobacco is a threat to the security and health of Canadian citizens," said Rick Comerford of the Canada Border Services Agency.

Facing numerous charges including smuggling, making false declarations, sale and distribution of unstamped tobacco products and proceeds of crime are: Walid Bakhit, 34, of Calgary, Sameer Kfouf, 49, Dina Bakhit, 39, and Houda Bakhit, 64, all of Downsview, Ont., Nashwan Namrood, 54, of Aurora, Ont., and Salti Kafouf, 66, Layla Kafouf, 63, Mariam Kafouf, 34, and Marleen Kafouf, 26, all of Hamilton.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Consequences

"People need to be aware that if they purchase contraband tobacco, they are funding criminal activity."

Rick Comerford, Canada Border Services Agency

Helping grape growers

Ontario wines to be sold at farmers' markets: Wynne

Premier Kathleen Wynne says she'll allow the sale of Ontario wines at farmers' markets.

She says it's part of a $75-million plan launched in 2009 to support local wineries and help the sector grow.

The plan also includes an Ontario wine fund to purchase specialized equipment and machinery, as well as better marketing for wines locally and around the world.

Wynne says they'll create a "wine secretariat" to come up with ways to reduce red tape and help grape growers and wineries be more competitive.

The premier has rejected calls to allow corner stores to sell beer and wine.

But she has said she would broaden their availability through specialty outlets and grocery stores.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Travel Mar 4 - Mar 11/ac

Los Angeles $622
Travel Jan 7 - Jan 14/ac

Vancouver $691
Travel Mar 11 - Mar 18/ac

Sun Destination Flights

Fort Lauderdale
$309
Travel Jan 23 - Jan 30/wg

Orlando $320
Travel Jan 22 - Jan 29/wg

Jamaica $428
Travel Jan 10 - Jan 17/ts

International Flights

London
$691
Travel Jan 24 - Feb 7/ts/fi
Business class for $2399.

	Economy	Business
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Puerto Plata 7 Nights 4-Star $892
Cofresi Palm Beach
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El Salvador 7 Nights 4-Star $983
Royal Decameron Salinitas
Departs Jan 2/nol/c6.

Cancun 7 Nights 4-Star $1032
Oasis Palm
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New York Flights + 3 Nights $472
Amsterdam Court
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Indian physiotherapy students hold placards at a rally in New Delhi on Monday, the first anniversary of the fatal gang rape of a 23-year-old physiotherapy student on a bus. The case cracked a cultural taboo surrounding discussion of sexual violence in the country. SAURABH DAS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Indians pay tribute to gang-rape victim

First anniversary. Attack sparked massive protests, spurring the government to double prison terms for rape and criminalize voyeurism, stalking, acid attacks and trafficking of women

Students, Bollywood actresses and women's groups held rallies and candlelight vigils across India on Monday in memory of a young woman whose fatal gang rape on a moving bus one year ago shook the nation's conscience.

The victim, a 23-year-old student, was heading home with a male friend after watching the movie Life of Pi when six men lured them onto a private bus. They beat the man with a metal bar, raped the woman and used the bar to inflict massive internal injuries. The two were dumped naked on the roadside, and the woman died two weeks later.

Protesters and politicians at a public meeting in New Delhi spoke of changes in social attitudes, tough new laws and police reform adopted after the massive street protests that followed the gang rape.

In New Delhi, Bollywood actress Swara Bhaskar led a group of musicians on a bus that performed street plays at several places along the same route taken by the rape victim's bus.

In central Delhi, a candlelight vigil was held by dozens of students in memory of Nirbhaya, or "fearless," the name given by the Indian media to the woman because rape victims cannot be identified under Indian law. Prayers were held in a temple in a southern suburb.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Social attitudes

"Social mindsets have to change.... Only then can I say my daughter did not die in vain."

Rape victim's father at a public meeting, pointing out that although laws on crimes against women have changed, Indians need to change social attitudes toward women.

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Spring thaw. Nenshi says Calgarians are mentally ready for next high water

Calgary's physical defences against flooding will be only marginally better by next spring, but Mayor Naheed Nenshi believes the city is psychologically prepared to deal with another major high-water event, should one occur in 2014.

"Of course, if we had another incident like this, it would be psychologically devastating, but I think we've built up human resilience in addition to physical resilience," Nenshi told Metro in an interview.

"One thing I didn't talk about much during the flooding — but was always just below the surface of the work that I was doing — was the mental and emotional well-being of people," the mayor added. "One of the reasons I pushed so hard to encourage people to volunteer and to help out neighbours and strangers wasn't just to get the basements cleaned up more quickly. It was actually so that people who, in the worst period of their lives, when they were feeling so beaten down, would know they live in a community where others care about them."

City manager Owen Tobert noted, however, that the city still has lots of post-flood work to do on projects like riverbank reinforcements and resources are limited.

"We're looking at a profound amount of resilience that needs to be done, and well, the clock is ticking and we're running out of time," he said. "But were doing the best we can."

ROBSON FLETCHER/METRO IN CALGARY

Calgary's psyche

"We've built up human resilience."

Naheed Nenshi, Calgary mayor, speaking of Calgarians' strength after spring floods.

Calgary Mayor Naheed Nenshi addresses media during the flooding crisis in June. METRO FILE

Moore apologizes for hungry-child quip

'Insensitive.' Industry minister changes tune from 'out of context' to sorry after full radio clip posted online

KATE WEBB
Metro in Vancouver

Federal Industry Minister James Moore apologized on Monday for making an "insensitive" comment to a reporter last week that child poverty is not Ottawa's problem.

"Is it my job to feed my neighbour's child? I don't think so," he chuckled to a Vancouver News1130 radio reporter, after saying the federal government is not going to "usurp the province's jurisdiction" over addressing child poverty.

At first, the B.C. MP insisted his comment had been taken out of context and also claimed the quote was inaccurate, but after the radio station posted the full audio clip on its website, he changed his tune.

"Caring for each other is a Canadian ethic that I strongly believe in — always have and always will," he said in a blog post published on his website on Monday.

B.C. has the highest child poverty rate in the country, at 18.6 per cent compared to the national rate of 13.3 per cent, according to advocacy group First Call.

Adrienne Montani, B.C. coordinator for First Call, said Moore's apology did not go far enough.

"He has a role as minister of industry to look at what kind of jobs, what kind of industries are getting federal government support and which kind aren't," she said.

"Right now we need two parents to work in most families, so either bring down the cost of living, like child care and housing, or raise wages, or make government subsidies better for those who the (job) market serves poorly and are on low wages. There are so many things they could do."

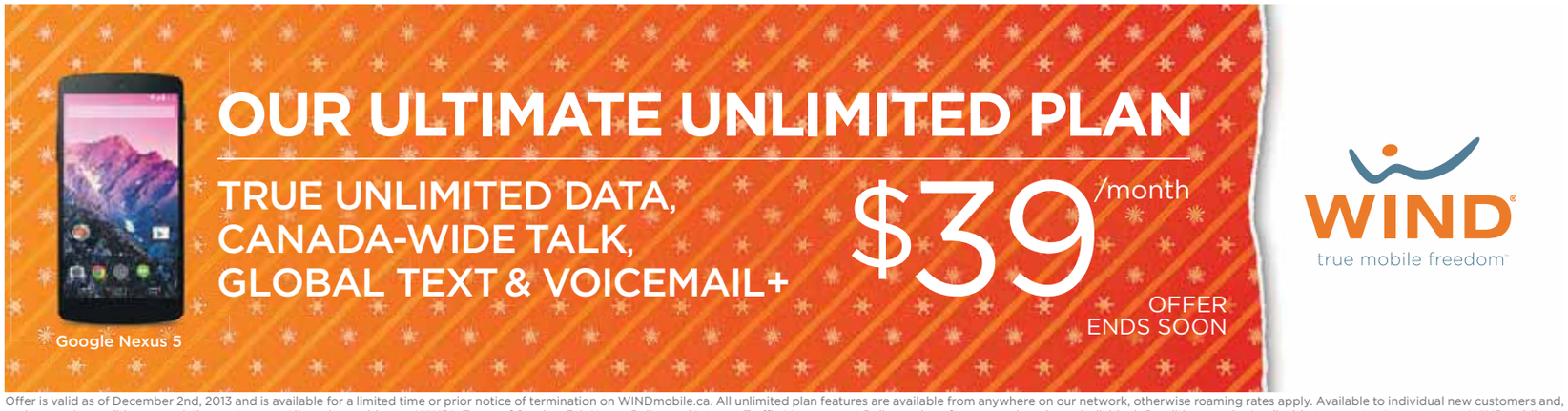
Moore did not make himself available for comment on Monday.

Industry Minister James Moore speaking in the House of Commons in October. ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

In a tight spot

The Harper government scrambled to shove a genie back into the bottle as one of its most sure-footed cabinet ministers made insensitive comments about hungry children.

- **Finance Minister Jim Flaherty defended the government, touting its reduction of taxes to address income inequality.** "We did the Working Income Tax Benefit, which people in that area of work will tell you was the most important tax reform for persons with limited income since the 1950s," he said.
- **The NDP and Liberals called Moore's comments callous and heartless.** They accuse the government of failing hungry kids and poor families.



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Friends say fake signer was part of murder mob

Bogus interpreter. He was determined 'not mentally fit to stand trial' in 2003 killings, according to friends

Thamsanqa Jantjie, the bogus sign language interpreter. ITUMELENG ENGLISH/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

The bogus sign language interpreter at last week's Nelson Mandela memorial service was among a group of people who accosted two men found with a stolen television and burned them to death by setting fire to tires placed around their necks, one of the interpreter's cousins and three of his friends said Monday.

But Thamsanqa Jantjie never went to trial for the 2003 killings when other suspects did in 2006 because authorities determined he was not mentally fit to stand trial, said the four. They insisted on speaking anonymously because of the sensitivity of the fake signing fiasco, which has deeply embarrassed South Africa's government and prompted a high-level investigation into how it happened.

Their account of the killings matched a description of the crime and the outcome for Jantjie that he himself described in an interview published on Sunday by the Sunday Times newspaper of Johannesburg.

"It was a community thing, what you call mob justice, and I was also there," Jantjie told the newspaper.

Jantjie was not at his house Monday, and the cousin told The Associated Press Jantjie had been picked up by someone in a car Sunday and had not returned. His cellphone rang through to an automatic message saying Jantjie was not reachable.

Instead of standing trial, Jantjie was institutionalized for a period of longer than a year, the four said, and then returned to live in his poor township neighbourhood on the outskirts of Soweto. At some point after that, they said, he started getting jobs doing sign language interpretation at events for the governing African National Congress Party.

Jantjie told The Associated Press last week he has schizophrenia and hallucinated, seeing angels while gesturing incoherently just three feet away from U.S. President Barack Obama and other world leaders during the Tuesday ceremony at a Soweto stadium. Signing experts said his arm and hand movements were mere gibberish. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Record appeal for Syrian aid

A Syrian man cries while holding the body of a child killed Sunday following a Syrian government airstrike in Aleppo, Syria. The exodus of millions of people from Syria prompted a record appeal by the UN on Monday for $6.5 billion to help the displaced. ALEPPO MEDIA CENTER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. security

Gitmo prisoners transferred

Two Guantanamo Bay prisoners have been transferred to Saudi Arabia as part of a renewed effort to close the offshore U.S. prison.

U.S. officials say the two Saudis have been transferred to the custody of their own government after a security review.

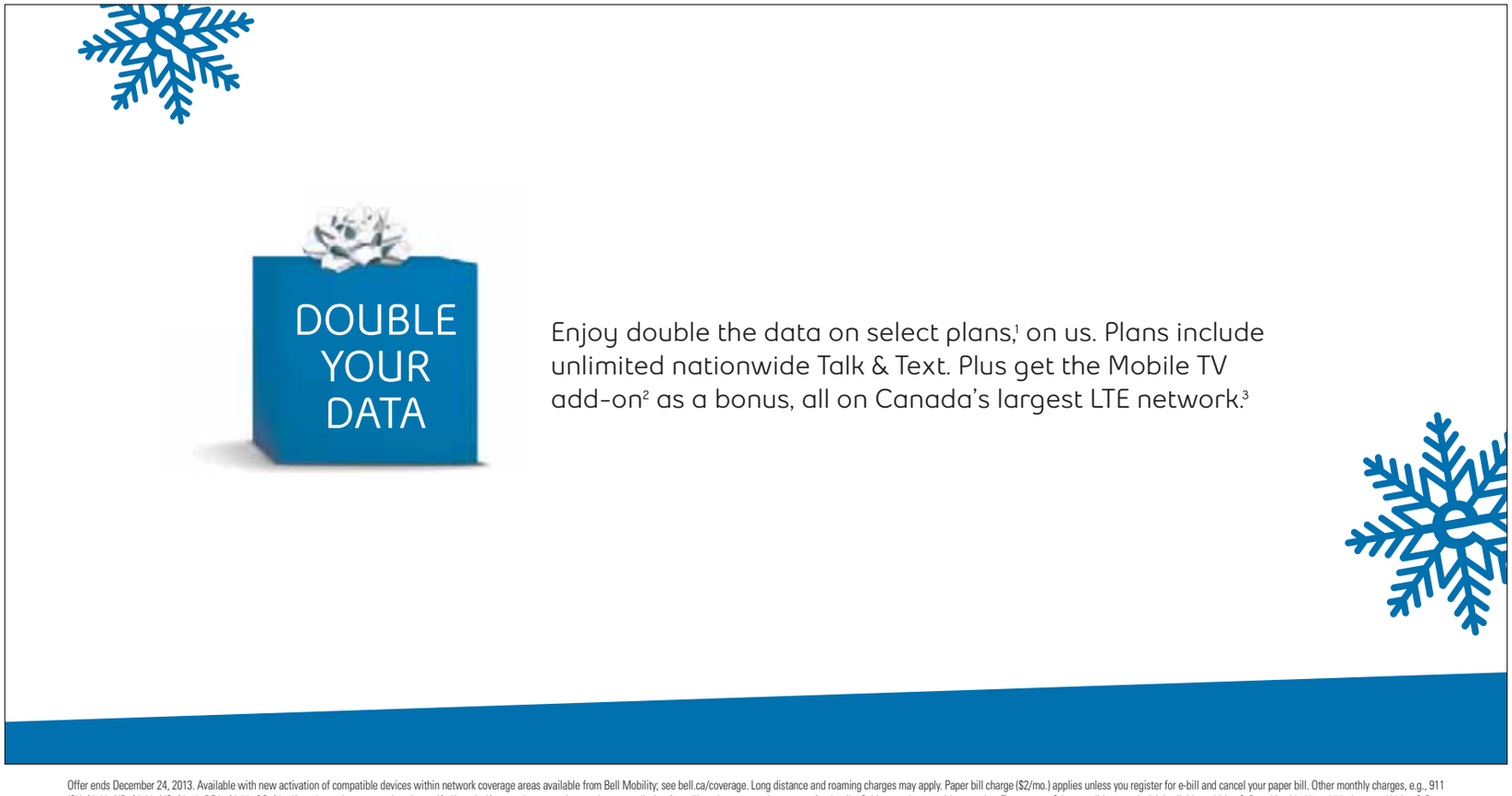
Neither man had been charged with a crime. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

France

Lab meat sold for eats

Meat from horses used in laboratory procedures was illegally sold as fit for human consumption and landed on French dinner tables, authorities said Monday.

The complex case raised new concerns about how France, with its rich culinary renown, polices its food supply. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS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Beauty queen shut out of ceremony

Miss International 2012 Ikumi Yoshimatsu addresses a news conference in Tokyo on Monday. SHIZUO KAMBAYASHI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Japan. Last year's Miss International files criminal complaint against agency exec over alleged extortion

A Japanese beauty queen won't be handing over her crown to her successor after she refused to sign with a major talent agency.

Ikumi Yoshimatsu, winner of last year's Miss International contest, has filed a criminal complaint against a top agency executive alleging obstruction of business, stalking, intimidation and extortion.

She says he threatened her life after she formed her own management agency rather than use his.

Controversy

The organizers confirmed they won't allow Yoshimatsu to appear because they don't want media coverage of the controversy to overshadow the event.

The teary-eyed beauty queen told reporters on Monday the executive had threatened sponsors and shareholders, and she was barred from Tuesday's ceremony in Tokyo.

The executive, Genichi Taniguchi, denied doing anything to Yoshimatsu and said he holds no grudges against her. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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METROLINX

Trial. Knox's solicitation of donations for victim an 'unbearable contradiction'

A lawyer urged an Italian appeals court on Monday to convict Amanda Knox of murdering British student Meredith Kercher and denounced as "unbearable" that the American was soliciting donations in Kercher's memory.

Francesco Maresca, in his closing arguments on behalf of the Kercher family in the third trial of Knox and co-defendant Raffaele Sollecito, urged the eight lay jurors on the panel of 10 to disregard publicity over the case as well as Knox's own statements, including her criticism of Italy's judicial system.

"She has become a well-known person. You know she signed contracts for millions of dollars for her book. She has someone who takes care of her public relations. She has a personal website where she invites people to collect donations in the memory of the victim, Meredith Kercher, which is an unbearable contradiction for the family," Maresca said.

Knox is soliciting donations on her website for her defence as well as an unspecified project in Kercher's memory.

Amanda Knox
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Knox's lawyer, Carlo Dalla Vedova, said after the hearing that she was doing so out of the friendship she felt for Kercher, and that the criticism of her actions was irrelevant to the case.

Kercher, 21, was brutally murdered in November 2007 in the apartment she shared with Knox in the university town of Perugia. She had been raped and her throat slashed. Prosecutors claim Knox and Sollecito carried out the murder with a third man, Ivory Coast-born Rudy Guede, who is serving a 16-year sentence.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Britain

Police to charge two people over offensive tweets

British police will charge two people over offensive tweets sent to a feminist activist, an online onslaught that sparked a national debate over the limits of free speech and pushed Twitter to revamp its abuse reporting worldwide. Prosecutors said Monday that 23-year-old Isabella Sorley and 25-year-old John Nimmo would be charged with "improper use of a communications network." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Same-sex marriage

Methodist pastor defies church's Book of Discipline

A United Methodist minister in the U.S. plans to defy a church order to surrender his credentials for performing a same-sex wedding. Rev. Frank Schaefer said Monday he cannot uphold the church's Book of Discipline because he finds it discriminatory. The Methodist church accepts gay and lesbian members but rejects the practice of homosexuality as "incompatible with Christian teaching." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Soaps. FDA wants makers of anti-bacterial products to prove safety, efficacy

After more than 40 years of study, the U.S. government says it has found no evidence that common anti-bacterial soaps prevent the spread of germs, and regulators want the makers of Dawn, Dial and other household staples to prove that their products do not pose health risks to consumers.

Scientists at the Food and Drug Administration announced Monday they are revisiting the safety of triclosan, the sanitizing agent found in soap in countless kitchens and bathrooms. Recent studies suggest triclosan and similar substances can interfere with hormone levels in lab animals and spur the growth of drug-resistant bacteria.

The FDA is revisiting the safety of several chemicals. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The government's preliminary ruling lends new support to outside researchers who have long argued that the chemicals are, at best, ineffective and at worst, a threat to public health.

While the rule only applies to personal hygiene products, it has implications for a broader $1 billion US industry that includes thousands of anti-bacterial products. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"The FDA is finally making a judgment call here and asking industry to show us that these products are better than soap and water."

Stuart Levy of Tufts University School of Medicine

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Canadians did not feel flush with cash this year. SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Majority felt strapped for cash this year

Haves and have-nots. Albertans were most likely to feel better off, while Quebecers were feeling the squeeze

Sun Life Financial says 2013 wasn't a great year financially for most Canadians.

An Ipsos Reid survey conducted in November for Sun Life found that, overall, 57 per cent of Canadians felt they were not any better off financially than they were a year ago. Those feelings were even stronger among women and those aged 55 and older, with 61 per cent of both groups saying their financial position had not improved year over year.

On the flip side, 38 per cent of those surveyed did say their finances had improved compared with a year ago.

Albertans were most likely to say they felt better off, at 47 per cent, followed by those in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, at 45 per cent, and Atlantic Canadians at 43 per cent.

Quebecers were least likely, with 63 per cent saying their financial position was no better than a year ago.

"It's concerning that a majority of Canadians aren't feeling better off financially than they were last year as we head into a holiday season where we tend to spend more and save less," Sun Life president Kevin Dougherty said of the results. THE CANADIAN PRESS

A down year

57%

The majority of Canadians felt they were not better off financially in 2013.

Collabo Innovations Inc.

Panasonic assigns patents portfolio to Ottawa firm

Panasonic Corp. will assign about 900 patents and patent applications to a new subsidiary of Wi-LAN Inc., the Ottawa-based patent licensing firm announced Monday. The patents will be assigned to Wi-LAN's new subsidiary, Collabo Innovations Inc.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Research program

EU funding new rail technologies

The executive arm of the European Union says it will give $620 million US to a research program trying to develop new railroad technologies by 2020.

The European Commission said Monday it will fund the program, together with companies active in the railway industry including Siemens, Thales, Alstom and others.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Market Minute

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FACEBOOK BUTTONS WE WOULD 'LIKE'

SHE SAYS

Jessica Napier
metronews.ca

What's not to like about Facebook? Plenty of things.

For years, users have been clicking the thumbs up icon to show their approval on everything from vacation photos to music videos to engagement announcements. But what happens when we come across those news feed items that aren't so likeable?

Facebook engineer Dan Muriello recently announced that the global social media site is experimenting with a new "sympathize" button to provide an alternative option to the iconic 'like.' I can think of a number of appropriate occasions to use this new option, especially for melancholy posts about breakups, deaths or other personal tragedies. The "sympathize" button would also work well when used to express a comical "I've been there man" on a status update about an epic hangover.

It may be some time before this new feature pops up on our screens, but in the meantime I'd like to propose some additional new tools that those software engineers might want to consider. Here are my top five most-wanted Facebook buttons:

The 'dislike' button. Realistically, the much-discussed 'dislike' button will never actually appear on the social networking site, but it's nice to dream. I know the potential for cyberbullying would be atrocious — but I'd love to have the option to give an enthusiastic thumbs down to yet another Rob Ford video.

The 'seriously' button. This button would be reserved for all those racist and homophobic outbursts or generally ignorant remarks that make you cringe and wonder how you are even possibly friends with this individual. Also appropriate to use on any overtly suggestive bathing suit photos and lengthy status updates full of hashtags.

The 'OMG, if I see another picture of this baby, I'm going to lose my mind' button. OK this one is pretty self-explanatory. Lately my news feed looks like a never-ending photo stream of offspring and it needs to stop. One or two snapshots of your newborn are lovely; posting a fresh 50-photo album every time the little tyke masters a new facial expression is completely gratuitous.

The 'nobody cares' button. A special feature designed for those users who don't seem to understand that over sharing the daily minutia of your mundane life isn't appropriate on Facebook (that's what Twitter is for). I'm looking at you, people who post multiple status updates whining about their flu symptoms in excruciating detail.

The 'vomit face' button. Sometimes nothing can encapsulate your feeling of total disgust like a putrid green, "I'm about to vomit," emoticon. This icon would be best suited for obnoxious humble brags, cheesy couple selfies, overly emotional song lyrics and anything to do with Robin Thicke. Bleugh.

Follow Jessica Napier on Twitter @MetroSheSays

ZOOM

The *really* old game of cat and mouse

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Domestication process verified

A cat-and-mouse game played out in a Chinese village some 5,300 years ago is helping scientists understand how wild felines transformed into the tame pets we know today.

In fact, it was the cat's appetite that started it down the path to domestication, scientists believe. The grain stored by ancient farmers was a magnet for rodents. And that drew wild cats into villages to hunt the little critters. Over time, wild cats adapted to village life and became tamer around their human hosts.

That's the leading theory, anyway, for how wild cats long ago were transformed and became ancestors of today's house cats. That happened in the Middle East, rather than China. But bones from the Chinese village back up the idea that felines took on the pest-control job in ancient times, says researcher Fiona Marshall of Washington University in St. Louis.

The study, focused on an agricultural village in northern China, comes from a poorly understood time in the history of cats. The first evidence of domesticated cats comes much later, in Egyptian artwork from about 4,000 years ago.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

5,300 years ago in China

- It's not yet clear whether the cats were from a local wild population, or were already domesticated and had been brought in from elsewhere. Either way, it shows that ancient cats filled the niche at the heart of the hypothesis about how domestication began.

Clickbait

ANDREW FIFIELD
andrew.fifield@metronews.ca

According to a study released by Netflix, you are indeed not the only person who spent an entire weekend watching Breaking Bad. In fact, more than 60 per cent of subscribers are binge-watchers, to the tune of 2.3 episodes per sitting. Here are some shows that will allow you to continue the habit — at least until Better Call Saul arrives.

CONTRIBUTED

Twin Peaks:

It seems a little silly to recommend a pop culture staple, but everybody knows someone who has been affected by having never watched the immortal cult classic about a supernatural murder mystery in a rugged town inhabited by a surplus of unsavoury weirdos. Decide for yourselves if you want to add the movie to your experience.

Terriers:

A short-lived but much-missed buddy-cop series that sadly managed to squeak out one season before collapsing under the weight of dismal ratings. Whether poor marketing or a too-crowded market is to blame for a premature demise, Terriers deserved better. Thankfully, the single-season arc ends about as perfectly as one could hope.

Justified:

Since Deadwood, Timothy Olyphant has nailed the swaggering, handsome lawman shtick. That shtick is honed to a knife's edge as he plays Raylan Givens, a U.S. marshal rustling up ne'er-do-wells in his childhood stomping grounds of rural Kentucky. Justified tends to be overshadowed by prestige "Golden Age" shows, but reliably clever writing usually makes it far more entertaining than most hours of Mad Men.

Twitter

@metropicks asked: Finance Minister Jim Flaherty says there's no plan to enrich CPP. Do you have a retirement plan?

@MiztressTia: Retirement plan? Of course, to die in the hardware aisle while working at Walmart at the age 98!!

@Gmc_gord: 15% buy gold, 10% lotto max, 5% my kids become wealthy, 70% work damn hard and live within my means (tho I can't resist #Amazon)

@ShonaLiz: Death.

@dan_giannini: Yah save more than you spend. Put it in something that will grow over time. Keep doing it believe me it works!

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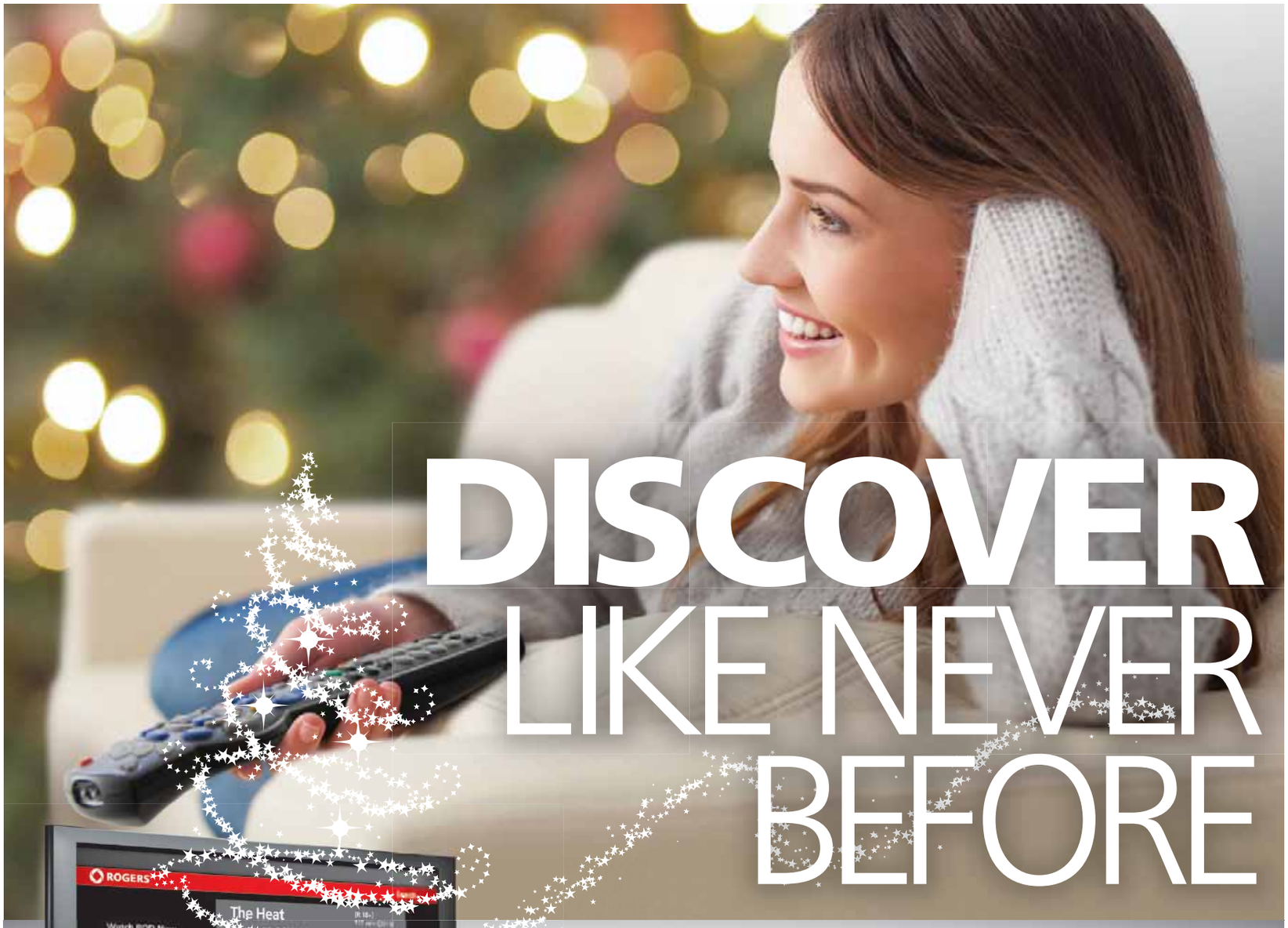

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What does a Sugar Plum Fairy have for high tea?

Dance of the Pastries. Jillian Vanstone, who rules the Land of Sweets onstage, is not adverse to scones, opera cake and high-quality choc

DOBBER DATES
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dobbernationloves.com
@dobbernation

Jillian Vanstone samples the Nutcracker High Tea at the Shangri-La Hotel. ANDREW JOHN VIRTUE DOBSON/FOR METRO

Spinning myself through the revolving door, I spill out of the cold and into the quiet calm of the Shangri-La Hotel's Lobby Lounge. I plop myself onto a comfy couch, stare longingly at a crackling fire and listen to Christmas jingles as I wait for my guest to arrive.

Enter Toronto's prettiest pixie, The National Ballet's Jillian Vanstone. We spend the next two hours chit-chatting about holiday excitement, Toronto's Nutcracker tradition and the beauty that is ballet. We are but a stone's throw from the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, where Vanstone will delight audiences this season as the Sugar Plum Fairy.

Inspired by the Nutcracker ballet, Shangri-La executive chef Damon Campbell and team have created a Nutcracker High Tea menu which pays homage to the collection of dances that appear in Act 2. The tea features pastries such as a Russian Dance Candy Cane peppermint macaron and Dance of the Reed Flutes Danish marzipan cake with citrus sponge and marzipan glaze. Vanstone and I nibble our way through the offerings and agree our favourite sweet is the Arabian Dance coffee opera cake with jaconde sponge, coffee hazelnut butter cream and chocolate glaze.

I've never been on a date with a ballerina before, let alone a Sugar Plum Fairy. While slathering her scone with thick Devonshire cream she recounts her first encounter with Toronto's favourite ballet. "My first experience with The Nutcracker was actually not in the audience but as a dancer. I was eight years old and played a rat in the battle scene!"

From ragamuffin rat to elegant fairy queen, Vanstone has dedicated over 10 years to the National Ballet. She describes the Sugar Plum Fairy as "a ruler of the Land of Sweets, a kind and benevolent leader." When asked how she prepares before prancing onstage in Act 2 she describes her face warm-up, which involves contorting every muscle under her nose so she can perfectly channel the positive energy of her character throughout her entire body.

She calls the Distillery District home and raves about her much-loved SOMA, where she can often be found indulging in the café's spiced hot chocolate. For seasonal fun, she enjoys strolling through the neighbourhood's Christmas market with a glass of warm mulled wine and handful of spiced nuts.

I press her on the details of her diet. "I always have a square of chocolate before going on stage for that extra energy boost," she says. But there's a proviso. "I'm not talking about Mars Bars here."

There you have it, from the ruler of the Land of Sweets herself — on matters of chocolate, opt for quality over quantity.

The Nutcracker

- The Nutcracker runs through Jan. 4, 2014 at the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, 145 Queen St. W. Tickets start at $25 and can be purchased online at national.ballet.ca or at the box office.

DVD review

Prisoners

Director. Denis Villeneuve

Stars. Jake Gyllenhaal, Hugh Jackman, Terrence Howard, Viola Davis, Paul Dano

The first U.S. feature by Quebec's Denis Villeneuve (Incendies) is a superb child kidnap thriller set in suburban Pennsylvania that uncoils with a serpent's stealth — and strikes just as suddenly. There's no way to prepare for what's about to happen to this comfortable neighbourhood, and also to everybody's notion of what's right and what's wrong in desperate circumstances. Hugh Jackman is a frantic dad, prepared to resort to vigilante justice to find his missing six-year-old daughter. Jake Gyllenhaal is a square-jawed cop fighting the clock, legal bureaucracy and rising anger. The two lead a strong cast that also includes Terrence Howard, Viola Davis, Paul Dano and Melissa Leo. A runner-up audience award winner at TIFF 2013, Prisoners is a potent commentary on modern life and fears and a triumph for Villeneuve. Extras include cast interviews and making-of featurettes.

PETER HOWELL

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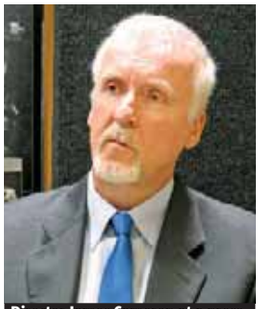
New Zealand. First of three Avatar sequels due in 2016

James Cameron says his vision for his three Avatar sequels is to create a family epic in the mould of The Godfather that will introduce viewers to new cultures and go underwater on his fictional moon Pandora.

The director announced Monday he will be filming the sequels in New Zealand, where he shot the triple Academy Award-winning original. In an interview with The Associated Press, Cameron also talked about life on a New Zealand farm, where he's growing walnuts and allowing his children to roam.

Cameron, 59, said he plans to release the first sequel in 2016, seven years after the release of Avatar, which has become the highest-grossing film in history with a box office take of nearly US$2.8 billion.

He said a core team has been developing new software for the sequels even while he's been gone on other projects, including 18 months planning an 11-kilometre descent to the deepest part of the ocean, which he successfully completed last year.



Director James Cameron at a press conference on Monday in New Zealand. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

"It's going to be a lot of new imagery and a lot of new environments and creatures across Pandora," he said. "We're blowing it out all over the place. At first I thought I was going to take it onto other worlds as well, in the same solar system, but it turned out not to be necessary. I mean the Pandora that we have imagined will be a fantasy land that is going to occupy people for decades to come, the way I see it."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hating on bad history? Reign stars don't mind

McQueen for a queen. Cast of much-critiqued show argue they're just making a teenage drama — plus they get to wear haute couture, so there

MICHELLE CASTILLO
Metro World News

The stars of Reign have heard all the criticisms about the historical inaccuracies the show — and that is completely fine with them.

"Anybody's certainly welcome to do the historically accurate take on it, but that quite frankly isn't our show.... There's been a lot of criticism about that, but at the end of the day we're making a bit of a fantasy," Torrance Coombs, who plays the role of Sebastian, explained.

Adelaide Kane plays Mary, Queen of Scots, on Reign. CONTRIBUTED

"We're making a teenage drama," Adelaide Kane, who plays Mary, Queen of Scots, added. Kane admitted that she used to get defensive when people spoke out against the show, but decided to stop reading all the hate. She's having more fun working with the cast and crew, wearing extravagant clothing and portraying one of the most notorious nobles that has ever existed.

Kane only knew the basics about Mary, Queen of Scots, before signing on to Reign. She had been auditioning for different shows for the CW network when she heard about the show. After submitting a video diary explaining who she was and channelling her father's Glaswegian accent, the producers selected her to play the main role before the audition process even started.

Her co-star Coombs knew very little about the legend as well, but he had some experience playing nobility from his role of Thomas Culpepper on The Tudors. He admitted that arriving on set felt like a "homecoming" of sorts, until he noticed the differences in characters and mood of the show — and a notable lack of nudity.

He said Reign's elaborate costumes helped transform the 21st century actors into 16th century royalty. Costume designer Meredith Markworth-Pollack, whose past credits include Gossip Girl and Hart of Dixie, garbs the actors and actresses in designers like Alexander McQueen and Saint Laurent Paris.

Kane says the corsets can get annoying and needing help to get into her outfits can be a pain. Still, she's enjoying every minute of it.

"I get to wear haute couture that I would never normally wear," Kane said. "Like I'm not going to the Emmys, not a debutante, you know. I don't get to wear casual Alexander McQueen haute couture every day, so that's been amazing. And, you just get to wear leather a lot. Lots of leather."

But, when the cameras stop rolling, Kane slips into her jeans and flats. The actors admit no one has any problems returning to the modern era. Cellphones and coffee cups are hidden just out of view.

"It's pretty hilarious," Kane added. "Yeah, everybody pulls their phones out of their boots or out of their corsets or whatever."

Quoted

"(At) the end of the day we're making a bit of a fantasy." Torrance Coombs, who plays Sebastian on Reign

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METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Prince Harry. ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

So a smelly prince walks into a bar in Antarctica...

As Prince Harry continues his epic trek in Antarctica, he could really use a drink. But life, he's learning, is full of disappointments. Harry and his hiking buddies — including Dominic West and Alexander Skarsgard — arrived at a bar at McMurdo Station only to be denied service, according to Radar Online. "They were denied (drinks)," a source says. "Only staff and employees are allowed alcohol and tobacco." It probably didn't help matters that Harry and company weren't at their most presentable. "All three were very smelly and scruffy," the source adds. "They are only allowed two two-minute showers per week."

Another star we don't want to see naked

Former Suite Life of Zack & Cody star Dylan Sprouse is the latest young Disney star caught up in a nude photo scandal, thanks to a pair of revealing selfies that hit the Internet over the weekend. The 21-year-old Sprouse, currently attending NYU, is owning up to it, at least. "Whoops, guess I'm not 14 and fat anymore," he tweeted. "I messed up, but I'd be a fool not to own up to it. Got to move past it, I suppose." He didn't make it through without enduring some gentle ribbing from his twin brother and former co-star, Cole Sprouse, who tweeted, "Cold in that bathroom, huh?"

Dylan Sprouse

The Word

What funny rumours have the stars heard about themselves?

MEREDITH ENGEL
Metro World News in New York City

We were on the red carpet at this year's Jingle Ball concert at Madison Square Garden, where Miley Cyrus, Robin Thicke, Macklemore, Enrique Iglesias and many other stars took the stage. So many big stars in one room means many opportunities for misinformation, so we decided to help the stars out — we had them clear up the silliest rumour they've heard about themselves.

Ryan Seacrest
What is the funniest story you have ever read about yourself?
That I can sing!
You can't sing?
I cannot sing. Just rap.

Snooki
What is the funniest story you have ever read about yourself?
That I dated Drake.
JWoww: How was it?
Snooki: It was great!

Kellan Lutz
What is the funniest story you have ever read about yourself?
I don't know how to read, so I don't know how to answer that question. No, I'm joking.

Dr. Oz
What is the funniest story you have ever read about yourself?
There was an article that I was having an affair with Oprah.
Of all people! What did you think?
It was a crazy idea.

WITH FILES FROM MAJA LUNDAGER

Rebel Wilson

Rebel and Melissa don't plan to size down

Rebel Wilson and pal Melissa McCarthy are leaning on each other to resist pressures from Hollywood about their weight, according to Star magazine. "Neither one of them is trying to lose weight, and they've formed this little support group to keep each other from falling into the skinny Hollywood trap," a source says of the Bridesmaids co-stars. "Obviously, they could both snap their fingers and lose the weight because of the resources they have available to them — which could include everything from personal trainers to lap band surgery — but right now they're agreeing with each other that they have to hold the line and provide a positive image for overweight girls everywhere. There will be plenty of time for dieting years from now, but Rebel and Melissa are determined to stay at their current sizes for now."

Susan's award-show highlights

Susan Sarandon has found a way to make boring awards shows more fun: going to them stoned. During a chat on Bravo's Watch What Happens Live, Sarandon was asked by Andy Cohen to name one event she'd shown up to stoned, to which she replied, "Only one?" After a laugh, the eight-time Golden Globe nominee, five-time Oscar nominee and four-time Emmy nominee candidly offered, "I would say almost all except the Oscars."

Susan Sarandon

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Hungover, but healthy

ROMINA McGUINNESS
Metro World News

December is the one month when it's OK to be tipsy 24/7. Health and fitness experts tell us how to deal with a hangover.

1. Replenish lost fluids

Alcohol functions as a diuretic, pulling the water out of your body.

"When this happens, you lose a lot of electrolytes (calcium, potassium and magnesium), and that's one of the reasons we feel terrible," says London-based nutritional therapist Gabriela Peacock. "Water gets transported back into your bloodstream much more quickly if the electrolytes are present. So the best way to rehydrate is to get these back in your system by drinking something containing these, such as coconut water."

2. Eat eggs and avoid a comedown

"Eggs contain high levels of protein and sulphur, two things that help get the toxins out of the liver," says Peacock. "The high protein content also increases the production of serotonin, a neurotransmitter in the brain that helps elevate our moods. So if you're feeling cranky after a night out, eating an egg helps. They're also a great source of B vitamins (depleted when we drink) that the liver needs in order to break down the ethanol."

3. Purify your insides

"Kale, broccoli, artichoke… these are all fantastic for liver regeneration," Peacock tells us.

Try steaming them and sprinkle with some spices.

"Turmeric and cinnamon stimulate the liver and ginger helps beat nausea."

4. Drink to de-puff

"Alcohol causes bloating, so drink some lemon-and-parsley (an anti-inflammatory) infused water to de-swell. Fill up two bottles of the pre-prepared brew, and keep one by your bed (for when you get home) and one in the fridge (for when you wake up)," Ary Nunez, Rihanna's personal trainer, said.

5. Go for a spin (if you can stand up straight)

If you're feeling queasy, you need to evaluate if you can actually move.

"Sit up straight (in your bed) and cross your legs. Now close your eyes and spend about 10 minutes breathing through your nose (the most efficient way of circulating oxygen) to figure out how you're feeling," says Nunez. "If you can make it to the gym, go to a one-hour spinning class."

6. Freeze your face

"Always keep gel ice packs in the freezer as this helps take out puffiness from under the eyes after a hard night out," says LA-based dermatologist Dr. Debra Jaliman, author of Skin Rules. "You can also take an over-the-counter antihistamine like Benadryl or apply an eye cream that contains caffeine (it constricts the blood vessels and decreases the blood flow under the eye) to improve the appearance of dark circles."

7. Scrub away the dirt

"I love sonic cleansing systems, such as the Clarisonic brush, because I really feel they help exfoliate and give the skin great glow," says Jaliman.

"If you don't have a brush, pick a gentle exfoliator, making sure it contains glycerin or ceramides, and spend about two minutes washing your face to get rid of all the grime."

EAT 3

Best Health

Stay healthy on vacation

BEST HEALTH MINUTE
Bonnie Munday
Editor-in-chief
Best Health Magazine

In the latest issue of Best Health magazine, freelance writer Lisa Evans looked at ways to ensure a happy and illness-free holiday. Here are just a few of her tips:

En route
Avoid germs, stay hydrated and step lively. Pack a small bottle of hand sanitizer in your carry-on if you're flying, and antiseptic wipes if you want to clean the arms of your seat, your seat-back tray or the handle of the bathroom door. Also, since cabin air is dry, avoid dehydration by drinking plenty of water. To keep your blood circulating, get up and walk around periodically.

At your destination
Eat and drink wisely. Consider packing a multivitamin if your destination has limited supplies of fresh fruits and vegetables. Depending on where you go, eat fruit only if you can peel it. All-you-can-eat buffet? Make sure you eat a protein-packed breakfast, which will help you avoid needing to snack later on. If you overindulged the night before, fuel up on foods that promote liver detoxification such as cruciferous vegetables, and water with lemon juice.

Don't take a break on exercise
Have an active vacation by taking advantage of fitness activities at your destination, and even just long walks on the beach. It'll help you stave off those extra pounds that are easy to put on during holidays. You'll also sleep better — and vacations are for relaxing, after all. FOR MORE FITNESS, FOOD AND BEAUTY FROM BEST HEALTH MAGAZINE, GO TO BESTHEALTHMAG.CA, OR CHECK OUT OUR IPAD APP.

Getting sick over the holidays is one stress you don't need. ISTOCK PHOTOS

It's probably time to get out in the sun more, boys. HANDOUT

Lack of Vitamin D is a villain's kryptonite

Movie magic. Could a shortage be the cause of movie villain failure? Maybe monsters should leave their darkened caves

How is it that movie heroes so often defeat stronger foes? Scientists at Imperial College London believe a poor lifestyle and lack of Vitamin D is hurting villain performance, citing a "lack of sunlight experienced by the evil characters" in films such as The Hobbit. Dr. Nicholas Hopkinson, whose theory is in the Christmas edition of the Medical Journal of Australia, explains more.

How would this problem affect villains?
According to our research, evildoers who dwell in the darkness and eat a poor diet are severely lacking in vitamin D, leading to muscle weakness and critically undermining their performance in battle. It is striking how often villains are defeated despite having superior numbers and weaponry, so we think anything to improve performance should be considered.

What advice would you give them?
Exposure to sunlight is one thing, and more healthy food and less relying on meat and the bodies of their enemies. But the bigger picture is they must change their ways and behavioral intervention could support that.

What other medical problems are associated with a villain lifestyle?
There are health and safety issues with spending a lot of time in darkness — injuries are often caused by inadequate lighting. But as I said, the only real solution is to become less villainous.

What further studies would build on your findings?
We have only scratched the surface with this investigation. One area for further research is to explore the link between evil and living in the dark. METRO

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Martini mayhem

Bond's boozy habit would hurt

He may have a license to kill, but is he sober enough to shoot? British doctors who carefully read Ian Fleming's series of James Bond novels say the celebrated spy regularly drank more than four times the recommended limit of alcohol per week. Their research was published in the light-hearted Christmas edition of the medical journal BMJ on Thursday. Bond's drinking habits put him at high risk for numerous alcohol-related diseases and an early alcohol-related death, the authors write.

Cancer

New research holds hope

A novel way to speed the testing of cancer drugs and quickly separate winners from duds has yielded its first big result: an experimental medicine that shows promise against a hard-to-treat form of breast cancer. The method involves using small samples and advanced statistics to analyze the results as they come in, researchers at the University of California said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Give that canned chef the boot with your own beefy pasta

ROSE REISMAN
For more, visit rosereisman.com or follow her on twitter @rosereisman

This recipe serves six. ROSE REISMAN

Ingredients

8 oz small-shell pasta

Meat Sauce

- 1 tsp vegetable oil
- 2/3 cup finely chopped onion
- 1 1/2 tsp finely chopped garlic
- 8 oz lean ground beef
- 1 cup tomato sauce

Cheese sauce

- 1 1/4 cups canned evaporated 2% milk
- 3/4 cup low-sodium beef stock
- 1/2 tsp Dijon mustard
- 2 tbsp all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup shredded aged cheddar cheese
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese (1 oz/30 g)
- 2 tbsp chopped parsley

1. Preheat oven to 425 F. Lightly coat a 9- × 13-inch casserole dish with cooking spray.

2. Bring pot of water to boil. Add pasta and cook 10 minutes or until tender but still firm. Drain; place in casserole dish.

3. Meat sauce: Heat vegetable oil in skillet over medium heat. Add onion and garlic and sauté 4 minutes or until softened. Add ground beef and cook, stirring to break up meat, 4 minutes or until no longer pink. Stir in tomato sauce, cover and cook 5 minutes. Set aside.

4. Cheese sauce: Combine milk, stock and mustard in saucepan. Slowly whisk in flour. Place over medium heat and stir until mix begins to boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer, stirring occasionally, 5 minutes or until sauce is slightly thickened. Stir in cheddar cheese and half the Parmesan cheese and stir until melted. Remove from the heat and add to the meat sauce.

5. Pour sauce over the cooked pasta and stir to combine. Sprinkle with remaining Parmesan and bake in the preheated oven for 10 to 15 minutes or until completely heated through. Garnish with parsley.

Health Solutions

Everybody say, 'goat cheeese'

NUTRI-BITES
Theresa Albert
DHN, RNCP
myfriendinfood.com

Every party needs a cheese platter but it doesn't have to be boring or unhealthy.

Think about a theme that goes for the goat.

Goat's cheese isn't just the soft variety that started showing up on pizza in the '80s. Many varieties are now using goat's milk for its health and flavour benefits.

This dairy is both lower in fat and contains a more easily digestible, naturally homogenized protein.

Some fun ways to bump up your platter are:

- Soak a log of chevre in extra virgin olive oil, minced garlic and chopped olives. Warm for 10 minutes and serve as spread.
- Place a chunk of feta on a platter, surround with walnuts, sprinkle with cinnamon and drizzle with honey.
- Goat's Brie goes remarkably well with pears and stout beer.
- Aged goat's cheddar is just as yummy as cow's. Think about serving it alongside apple pie.

Goat's cheese provides all of the calcium, phosphorus, riboflavin and vitamin A you want from your cheese but with that little extra zip.

THERESA ALBERT IS A FOOD COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST AND PRIVATE NUTRITIONIST IN TORONTO. SHE IS @THERESAALBERT ON TWITTER AND FOUND DAILY AT MYFRIENDINFOOD.COM

Vegetarian with a kick: Baked Tomato and Cheese Penne

This recipe serves 10. PRESIDENT'S CHOICE

Ingredients

- 1 pkg (454 g) PC Splendido Penne Rigate
- 2 tbsp (25 ml) olive oil
- 2 cups (500 ml) chopped white onion
- 4 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 cans (each 796 ml) San Marzano tomatoes
- 1 jar (270 ml) PC Splendido Tomato Pesto
- 1 ball (340 g) mozzarella cheese, shredded

Tomato pesto gives this meatless, cheesy pasta bake an extra tomato kick. It's great for serving a crowd, or bank the leftovers for another night.

1. Preheat oven to 400 F (200 C). Grease 13 X 9-inch (3 L) glass baking dish.

2. In large pot of boiling salted water, cook pasta for 5 minutes; drain. Pasta will not be tender.

3. In large saucepan, heat oil over medium-low heat; cook onion for 8 to 10 minutes or until softened. Stir in garlic; cook for 30 seconds or until fragrant. Add tomatoes and their juices. Using potato masher, crush them in the saucepan. Stir in pesto. Increase heat to medium; cook for 8 to 10 minutes or until flavours have melded and sauce is hot.

4. In large bowl, toss pasta in hot sauce. Scrape into prepared baking dish. Top with shredded cheese. Bake uncovered for 15 to 20 minutes or until cheese is melted and browned.

COURTESY PRESIDENT'S CHOICE

The sun and sea of Florida comes at a price. ISTOCK

Prepare for the pitfalls before spreading your snowbird wings

JOLT act. If it passes in Congress, more Canucks swapping snow for sun will face income and real estate tax bills, and more

YOUR MONEY
Alison Griffiths
money@metronews.ca

I've been a (working) snowbird in Florida for five years and love it. My husband and I feel very fortunate. But, like everything else, there's a learning curve.

Aside from learning how to live in two countries, there are tax and real estate considerations. This is especially true since the Jobs Originated through Launching Travel (JOLT) Act was proposed in the spring. Among other things, the act would extend the time Canadians buying homes for $500,000 or more can be in the U.S. without a visa from the current 182 days to 240.

The JOLT Act didn't make it through Congress this fall, but it's likely to pass on reintroduction if pressure to reduce the real estate benchmark and make tax changes is successful.

It will be great to have the flexibility. However, it could mean that more snowbirds are subject to U.S. income and estate tax because they will be deemed U.S. residents.

The formula for determining U.S. residency is a bit complex but essentially amounts to an average of 120 days annually over three years. That means some snowbirds are already considered U.S. residents but don't know it. The whole point of JOLT is to benefit the $130-billion US travel industry. So I suspect that tax changes will be included when the act is eventually passed, otherwise Canadian snowbirds will steer clear of Uncle Sam by keeping their winter sojourns shorter.

And one more thing...

• **Health care.** Another important issue for snowbirds is health care. Provincial health plans don't cover you if you're out of the country more than six months and you may have to re-establish residency in order to qualify again.

In the meantime, anyone who spends an extended period of time in the U.S. and is not working or studying should file Form 8840, Closer Connection Exemption Statement for Aliens. Essentially, it's a declaration of Canadian residency.

Snowbirds should also maintain a log of when they cross the border and keep on hand copies of credit card statements, income tax assessments and property taxes, just in case there is a question about where you are a permanent resident.

Don't try to cheat! Next summer a new system will track not only when you enter the U.S., but also your departure. The other issue for snowbirds owning a U.S. home is that if the Canadian owner or a joint owner dies, the U.S. property may be subject to estate tax, but only if you're wealthy.

Also, there may be Canadian tax on capital gains to be paid for a second home in the U.S. or tax on rental income. Canadians who bought property at bargain prices between 2008 and 2012 could make substantial gains if the market eventually moves back to more normal levels and if the loonie continues to slide.

Enjoying the snowbird life isn't as simple as it was years ago. But if you take your time, follow all regulations to the letter, use a U.S.-based lawyer for real estate transactions and keep on top of developments through organizations such as the Canadian Snowbird Association you'll find, as I do, that the winter-less life is really quite fine.

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Only fools rush in ... to an overindulgent Xmas

Alison Sweeney. Host of The Biggest Loser is keen to set a good example for her kids by having a healthy, disciplined holiday

MAJA LUNDAGER PEDERSEN
Metro World News in NYC

We recently sat down with Alison Sweeney, host of The Biggest Loser and the new leader of California Almonds' team of lifestyle experts, for a talk about health and holidays.

During our chat, one thing became clear: No Christmas miracle will save your weight. Whereas many resort to telling themselves that during the holidays calories don't count, Sweeney doesn't buy into that theory — and it shows in her food choices and the way she raises her children.

"Getting carried away and looking at it like 'Oh, I'll figure it out later,' is not a good idea," she tells us. Her go-to snack at holiday parties is vegetables — just that. She wants to set a good example for her kids, she says.

"I have an 8-year-old and a 4-year-old and I want to instill in them healthy nutritional values. I want them to be used to making healthy choices themselves," Sweeney, who is also author of The Star Attraction and The Mommy Diet, says.

But that doesn't mean cutting out fun, period. "I don't want them to feel like they can never have something indulgent, but (I want them to) also know how to control their portions."

She doesn't understand why people would ever lie to themselves about what is healthy and what is not.

"You need to arm yourself with the information. If you want to eat (whatever you feel like eating), go for it, but go in knowing what you are really eating and how many calories are really in it. Don't let them fool you, don't fool yourself. Be honest with yourself about what you put in your body and maybe you will make better choices. At least you will make educated ones."

Goals for 2014

• **Question.** On Twitter Sweeney asked people what their 2014 healthy goals are. She shared her favorite answers with us:

"Some of the ones that I loved hearing people talk about were wanting to make healthier choices with their children. What can we do together as a family to work out? Lot's of people responded that they want to get more sleep, which is definitely something I need to work on. I liked people talking about finding time to work out. It doesn't have to be all or nothing — if you can't make time for an hour-long workout, that doesn't mean you shouldn't do anything. You can still find 10 minutes to do some squats or lunges. Get something in."

Sweeney reminds us that exercise doesn't have to be all or nothing. Do 10 minutes if you can't do an hour. GETTY IMAGE

Usage-based insurance in Canada?
What the Beep!

Select Canadian insurers have started offering usage-based car insurance on an optional basis. This option, while still new, may be a cost-effective solution for some drivers.

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Professional presents.
Gift-giving etiquette around the watercooler

As if shopping for your family wasn't hard enough — holiday gift-giving in the workplace can be yet another tricky dilemma. ISTOCK

How do you give your boss a little something without looking like a brown-noser? What kind of Secret Santa gift do you get that guy from accounting that you've never spoken to? Nicole Williams, LinkedIn's career expert, weighs in on what's appropriate for under the office tree.

Should you give a gift to your boss?
"Personally, I think it's wise to give your boss something around the holidays," Williams tells us. "Giving a gift acts as a thank you for their mentorship and guidance throughout the year. A heartfelt handwritten note is often the best gift. Gift cards, bath sets, knick-knacks often get regifted or forgotten. However, I have saved several handwritten notes I've received from employees over the years."

If you are a manager, should you give something to your team/ department?
"If your team went above and beyond this year — give them a treat," she recommends. "Check in with your supervisor to see if there is any money in the budget for something like this. If not, see if you can pool your resources and plan a pizza party for the office or tab at the local watering hole. Or, invest in an office ping-pong table."

If you are giving to one or two co-workers, should you really give something to the whole team/department?
"You shouldn't feel obligated to get a gift for everyone you work with. If you did that, you'd go broke come New Year's. Williams also has advice on when to present your colleagues with presents. "Give these gifts away from the office. No need to rub your other co-worker's nose in your presents," she says.

You've got the write stuff

"A heartfelt handwritten note is often the best gift."
Nicole Williams
LinkedIn's career expert

Perfect gift for the boss
"The gift has to say so much: 'Thank you,' 'Please give me a raise,' 'I'm classy yet poor,'" says Williams. "It has to be personal, but not too personal. Gifting your boss something they can use every day and that make their lives easier is often the best gift of all." She suggests a set of adjustable collar stays by Swiss Stays for a male boss. "This is the type of gift that is personal …but not too personal," says Williams. And for a female she likes the Minimergency Kit by Pinch Provisions — "a chic little emergency beauty kit to keep at her desk. "

TINA CHADHA, METRO

Santa's not the only one who's stressed

The holiday's hardest workers. While you're settling onto the sofa this season, give a thought to those whose jobs don't halt once the halls are decked

KIERON MONKS
Metro World News

Increasing numbers of us will not be taking a time out for Christmas. These are some of the most unfortunate professions to be in over the holidays.

Paramedics
A sharp spike in alcohol-related injuries make this the nightmare season for ambulance staff, and their patients are often violent as well as difficult to treat.

McDonald's
The world's second largest restaurant chain (after sandwich chain Subway) has pressured franchises to open on Christmas Day, which had been the only day it closed. Employees have petitioned the company to change their minds, but the restaurants will open, with no holiday pay or overtime for staff.

Sports stars
Not normally deserving of sympathy, but while most people are eating themselves into a coma, athletes are sprinting around frozen fields and playing matches that the hopes of millions rest on. The U.S. basketball season arranges a number of top clashes for December 25, while British footballers can forget spending time with their loved ones.

Plumbers
The season of frozen pipes means the people that fix them are constantly on call, and as families push their homes to the limit, emergencies are far more likely. Plumbers are also under severe pressure to resolve problems quickly so the occasion is not interrupted.

Samaritans
At peak time for suicides and depression, the U.K. suicide prevention charity offers 24-hour support to people in crisis. Conditions can be bleak, too, for staff managing the phones, sacrificing their holiday to work around the clock offering hope to the hopeless, as well as a punching bag for abuse.

Honourable mentions for: Soldiers, security guards, vicars, chefs and reporters for 24-hour news channels.

In many countries, paramedics take longer shifts over Christmas, including December 25, so the thankless task lasts longer. ISTOCK

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Didn't make the grade? Don't hesitate to ask how come

Ask a professor.
Please break down this B for me, Teach, because I thought I was A-coastin'

LEE SKALLERUP BESSETTE
Metro World News

It's the end of the semester and your grades are about to be posted, if they haven't been already. Some of your grades may end up being a disappointment to you. Before you go to complain to your professor about how unfair your final grade seems, take a breath and follow these steps.

Check the syllabus

It bears repeating that most of the answers to students' questions can be found in the handy-dandy syllabus.

Take accountability

"Don't forget, your grade isn't just based on what you did, but what you didn't do as well."
Dr. Lee Skallerup Bessette
English and writing instructor

It should clearly have the grade breakdown laid out. Just because you got an A on the majority of your assignments doesn't mean you will get an A in the class. It depends what the assignments you aced were worth.

Check what you missed

Don't forget, your grade isn't just based on what you did, but what you didn't do as well. If you received As on all the work you did, but you only did half the work, then those As turn into Fs pretty quickly.

Now, professors make mistakes when they calculate grades; invariably, every semester, I misread my spreadsheet in the transfer to the official system or forget to count something from a student who handed work in at a different time.

These things happen, and if you believe this is what went wonky with your grade, calmly and rationally contact the professor about the potential mistake.

More often than not, though, you receive the grade you earned. And that you "need" a certain grade in no way convinces your professors of their error or unfairness.

In fact, "needing" a grade is on you, the student, to make sure that you work to earn that grade. It's not the professor's responsibility to retroactively change the grade once the work has been completed.

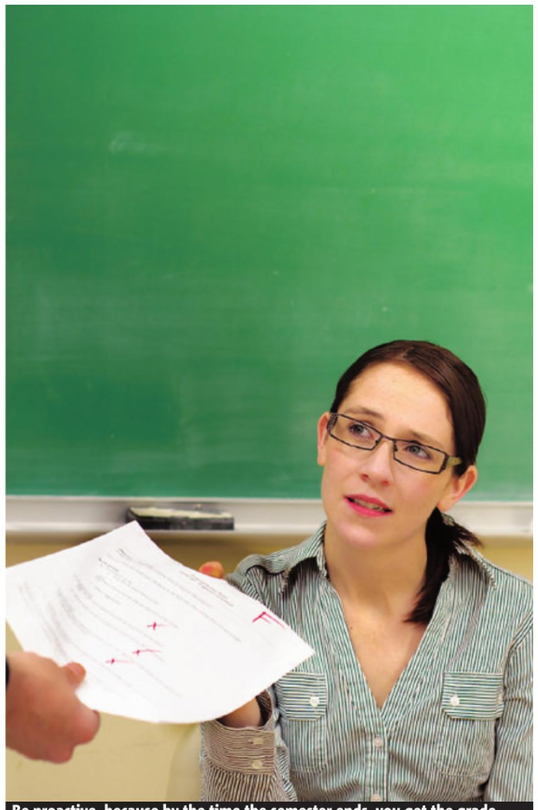
If you get a grade that is lower than you expected or wanted, take it as a wake-up call.

Steps to success

What can you do next semester to make sure you are not in a similar situation again?

- Go to the professor's office hours.
- Get more sleep.
- Create better study habits.
- Go to the tutoring center on campus for extra help

DR. LEE SKALLERUP BESSETTE IS AN ENGLISH AND WRITING INSTRUCTOR WHO HAS BEEN TEACHING AT COLLEGES FOR ALMOST 15 YEARS, IN THREE DIFFERENT STATES, TWO COUNTRIES AND TWO LANGUAGES.



Be proactive, because by the time the semester ends, you get the grade you've earned — whether you think you deserve it or not. ISTOCK

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Searching for a few treasures in town?

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TAKARA SMALL
Metro News in Toronto
@takarasmall

Who: Heather Reier

What: Cake Beauty, a line of scrumptious skincare and hair products perfect to chase away winter woes

Where: Based in Toronto

Why: "It's like having your cake and eating it too. You can have natural ingredients that are paraben free and it doesn't mean it has to be beige and boring."

Still looking for the perfect holiday gift, eh?

Think north of the 49th parallel this season and choose holiday gifts made and designed by Canadian entrepreneurs to put under the tree this year.

Heather Reier is the founder of Cake Beauty, a line of great smelling, great-feeling creams and hair products that she proudly refers to as her "cake beauties."

Reier is one of several home grown business owners who are offering Canadian consumers holiday products for Christmas that would make great stocking stuffers and presents. The entrepreneur started her business from the comfort of her own kitchen after realizing that there must be an alternative to the products she was seeing on shelves that were full of preservatives and chemicals.

E-laborate

• Check out our gift guide full of great products made by and for Canadians at metronews.ca/mom-and-pop-shops

Heather Reier wants you to feel both divine and delicious this season with help from her paraben-free beauty products. PROVIDED

"There isn't a need to put a lot of junk that's not good for you in [goods]. There are alternatives," she says.

This holiday she partnered with Canadian fashion company Nella Bella to produce a special collection complete with the business' most popular creams, called Milk Made, Desserted Island and Vanilla Cashmere, in an exclusive bag.

But what makes her products stand out, among many other reasons, is that she is dedicated to making sure her products are created in Canada — the Greater Toronto Area to be precise.

"It can be financially easier to not make it here but Canada is important to me and part of my heritage.... It's nice to support other Canadian businesses."

Cake Beauty isn't the only Canadian business that has products available for this season.

Joanna Griffiths, owner of KnixWear, also has a bevy of products for the discerning Canadian.

Her line of underwear features a high-tech fabric that's integrated into the underwear to soak up moisture and eliminate odour to make sure the garments are comfortable and stay dry. Built for the woman who wants to workout but also stay sweat-free and fashionable, Griffiths hopes to give U.S. companies like Victoria's Secret and Nike a run for their money with the innovative line.

"I came up with the idea five years ago, which seems crazy to me. I was having a conversation with my mother who is a doctor identifying problems facing women."

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Terrence Ross looks for an outlet during the Raptors' game against the San Antonio Spurs last Tuesday at Air Canada Centre. Since Rudy Gay's departure, Ross's scoring has surged with increased touches. He's averaging 14.5 points on 37.9 per cent shooting in the four games since the trade. DAVID COOPER/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Ross carving out territory in Toronto

NBA. After roster shakeup, swingman getting ample opportunity to produce

It remains to be seen whether young Terrence Ross can consistently figure out the nuances of NBA basketball, but he certainly understands the opportunity that's being afforded him right now.

The second-year wing ascended to the Raptors' starting lineup after the departure of Rudy Gay.

Second-year starter

"I just knew it was an opportunity for me to go out there and show what I can do."

Raptors sophomore wing Terrence Ross on getting a chance in Toronto's starting five.

"It's probably the biggest opportunity of my career," the 21-year-old said Monday.

So far, so good.

Ross has had four solid games — three as a starter — since the Raptors shipped Gay, Quincy Acy and Aaron Gray to Sacramento.

Ross has been effective offensively, he hasn't hurt the Raptors with his defence and he hasn't suffered too many long lapses of concentration.

He's not perfect, but he's had less than a season and a half in the NBA, so mistakes should be expected. And they're fewer and farther between of late.

"The Chicago game (an easy Raptors win Saturday night) wasn't consistent from a shooting standpoint, but the great thing about Terrence … is even though he didn't have the juice or the speed in the Chicago game, he came and rebounded, he made passes, he got defensive plays," said head coach Dwane Casey.

Ross is blessed with an abundance of athletic ability but a shortage of concentration. But if he can "get it," he can become a valuable piece, considering he is a fine three-point shooter who can finish on the break and should be quick enough to handle multiple defensive assignments.

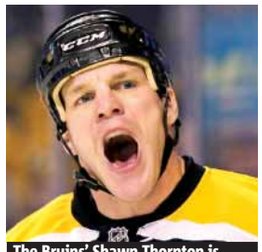
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

NHL. Thornton appealing 15-game suspension for attack on Penguin Orpik

Bruins tough guy Shawn Thornton has decided to appeal his 15-game suspension for punching and injuring unsuspecting Penguins defenceman Brooks Orpik.

As laid out in the collective bargaining agreement, the appeal first goes to commissioner Gary Bettman. If Bettman upholds the suspension, Thornton and the NHLPA can then elect to appeal to a neutral arbitrator.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



The Bruins' Shawn Thornton is appealing his 15-game suspension. CHARLES KRUPA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

UFC. Jones, Gustafsson support GSP's decision

UFC light-heavyweight champion Jon (Bones) Jones is backing Georges St-Pierre's decision to give up his title and walk away from the sport.

"I'm proud of him," Jones said in an interview from Sacramento, site of the UFC's weekend televised card. "I think he's listening to his body and he's doing what makes him happy and that's what life is about, ultimately."

Calling his life a "freaking zoo," St-Pierre announced Friday that he was leaving the sport for an undetermined period of time to look after undisclosed personal issues. He is ranked No. 2 behind Jones on the UFC's pound-for-pound top fighter list. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Quoted

"If he thinks that's the right decision, I understand.... Only he knows what's best for him."

Alexander (The Mauler) Gustafsson, on Georges St-Pierre's decision to take a leave from mixed martial arts.

Sports in pictures

1 College basketball.

Canuck named player of week

Canada's Michelle Plouffe has been named NCAA player of the week by espnW. The senior forward from Edmonton is averaging 19.6 points and 11.4 rebounds a game this season. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

2 NFL. 'Skins coach has no plans to resign

Washington Redskins coach Mike Shanahan said Monday it's "accurate" that he doesn't plan to quit after what will be his third losing season in four years. The Redskins are 3-11.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

3 NFL. Source: Incognito out for rest of year

Miami Dolphins guard Richie Incognito will remain on the NFL's suspended list with pay for the rest of the season, including the playoffs, a person familiar with the situation said Monday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

RedBlacks pluck trio of Argos from expansion draft

CFL. Starting offensive lineman Joe Eppele among players leaving Toronto for Ottawa

A good day for the Ottawa RedBlacks and the CFL, but a painful one for the other eight teams.

"There's no doubt," Toronto Argonauts GM Jim Barker said after Monday's expansion draft. "Everybody in the league lost players they didn't necessarily want to lose.

"It's not a fun deal. You spend time and you develop (talent) but for the league it's a great exciting time. And I thought (GM) Marcel (Desjardins) and (coach) Rick (Campbell) and those guys did a fantastic job in piecing together their picks."

Defensive end Jonathan Williams became a RedBlack in Monday's expansion draft. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The Argos lost Canadian offensive lineman Joe Eppele and linebacker Jason Pottinger and import defensive end Jonathan Williams to the RedBlacks.

Barker tried to prepare his squad for the coming changes.

"I sent all the players a letter over the weekend. Our team we knew was never going to be the same, but this (draft) is different. It doesn't happen very often."

The Argos lost an offensive line starter in Eppele and a former starter and important special teams contributor in Pottinger. Williams, described by Barker as an up-and-comer, saw action on and off as a backup.

"We have ideas of what we want to do but it obviously changes things that you might have done," Barker said of the losses. "That's the process we're in now — trying to recover and fill holes." THE CANADIAN PRESS

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Boston	33	22	9	2	92	70	46
Montreal	35	20	12	3	88	75	43
Tampa Bay	33	19	11	3	90	80	41
Detroit	35	15	11	9	89	94	39
Toronto	34	17	14	3	97	99	37
Ottawa	34	13	15	6	96	111	32
Florida	34	12	17	5	78	109	29
Buffalo	33	7	23	3	55	96	17

METROPOLITAN DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Pittsburgh	34	23	10	1	105	74	47
Washington	33	18	12	3	105	97	39
Carolina	34	14	13	7	79	94	35
NY Rangers	34	16	17	1	76	91	33
Columbus	33	14	15	4	85	92	32
Philadelphia	33	14	15	4	76	91	32
New Jersey	34	13	15	6	78	85	32
NY Islanders	34	9	19	6	83	118	24

WESTERN CONFERENCE

CENTRAL DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Chicago	36	24	7	5	135	101	53
St. Louis	31	22	6	3	110	73	47
Colorado	31	21	9	1	88	73	43
Minnesota	35	19	11	5	81	81	43
Dallas	31	15	11	5	90	93	35
Nashville	33	16	14	3	77	92	35
Winnipeg	34	14	15	5	90	100	33

PACIFIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Anaheim	35	23	7	5	111	89	51
Los Angeles	34	22	8	4	94	68	48
San Jose	33	20	7	6	108	82	46
Vancouver	35	20	10	5	98	83	45
Phoenix	32	18	9	5	104	100	41
Calgary	33	13	15	5	86	106	31
Edmonton	35	11	21	3	93	120	25

Note: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss.

Monday's results
Winnipeg at Columbus
Toronto at Pittsburgh
St. Louis at Ottawa
Dallas at Colorado

Sunday's results
Washington 5 Philadelphia 4 (SO)
Tampa Bay 3 Detroit 0
Florida 2 Montreal 1
NY Rangers 4 Calgary 3 (SO)
Chicago 3 Los Angeles 1
Anaheim 3 Edmonton 2

Tuesday's games — All Times Eastern
Calgary at Boston, 7 p.m.
Winnipeg at Buffalo, 7 p.m.
Tampa Bay at NY Islanders, 7 p.m.
Florida at Toronto, 7 p.m.
Anaheim at Detroit, 7:30 p.m.
Phoenix at Montreal, 7:30 p.m.
Washington at Philadelphia, 7:30 p.m.
Vancouver at Minnesota, 8 p.m.
San Jose at St. Louis, 8 p.m.
Chicago at Nashville, 8 p.m.
Colorado at Dallas, 8:30 p.m.
Edmonton at Los Angeles, 10:30 p.m.

Wednesday's games
Ottawa at New Jersey, 7:30 p.m.
Pittsburgh at NY Rangers, 8 p.m.

SCORING LEADERS

	G	A	Pts
Crosby, Pgh	18	28	46
Kane, Chi	19	26	45
Malkin, Pgh	9	32	41
Getzlaf, Ana	16	23	39
Ovechkin, Wash	28	9	37
Tavares, NYI	13	24	37
Perry, Ana	21	15	36
Backstrom, Wash	8	28	36
Steen, StL	22	13	35
Thornton, SJ	5	30	35
Kunitz, Pgh	17	16	33
Sharp, Chi	16	17	33
Kessel, Tor	17	15	32
Marleau, SJ	15	17	32
Toews, Chi	13	19	32
Seguin, Dal	17	14	31
St. Louis, TBL	13	18	31
D. Sedin, Vcr	11	20	31
H. Sedin, Vcr	9	22	31
Backes, StL	16	14	30
Ryan, Ott	15	15	30
Little, Win	13	17	30
Pavelski, SJ	12	18	30
Zetterberg, Det	11	19	30
Couture, SJ	10	20	30
Karlsson, Ott	9	21	30
Hudler, Cal	9	21	30
Keith, Chi	2	28	30

Not including last night's games

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
d-Indiana	20	3	.870	—
d-Miami	17	6	.739	3
Atlanta	12	12	.500	8½
d-Boston	11	14	.440	10
Detroit	11	14	.440	10
Charlotte	10	14	.417	10½
Toronto	9	13	.409	10½
Chicago	9	13	.409	10½
Washington	9	13	.409	10½
Cleveland	9	14	.391	11
Brooklyn	8	15	.348	12
New York	7	16	.304	13
Orlando	7	17	.292	13½
Philadelphia	7	18	.280	14
Milwaukee	5	19	.208	15½

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
d-Portland	21	4	.840	—
Oklahoma City	19	4	.826	1
d-San Antonio	19	4	.826	1
d-L.A. Clippers	16	9	.640	5
Houston	16	9	.640	5
Phoenix	14	9	.609	6
Denver	14	9	.609	6
Dallas	14	10	.583	6½
Golden State	13	12	.520	8
Minnesota	12	12	.500	8½
New Orleans	11	11	.500	8½
L.A. Lakers	11	12	.478	9
Memphis	10	13	.435	10
Sacramento	7	15	.318	12½
Utah	6	20	.231	15½

d - division leader

Monday's results
Detroit at Indiana
Minnesota at Boston
L.A. Lakers at Atlanta
Utah at Miami
Washington at New York
Philadelphia at Brooklyn
Orlando at Chicago
San Antonio at L.A. Clippers

Sunday's results
Portland 111 Detroit 109 (OT)
Sacramento 106 Houston 91
Minnesota 101 Memphis 93
Oklahoma City 101 Orlando 98
Denver 102 New Orleans 93
Phoenix 106 Golden State 102

Tuesday's games — All Times Eastern
Portland at Cleveland, 7 p.m.
Sacramento at Charlotte, 7 p.m.
L.A. Lakers at Memphis, 8 p.m.
Oklahoma City at Denver, 9 p.m.
New Orleans at Golden State, 10:30 p.m.

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MLB

Jays sign another knuckleballer

The Toronto Blue Jays have signed Japanese pitcher Tomo Ohka and infielder Jared Goedert to minor-league contracts.

Both have been invited to attend the Jays' spring training camp.

Ohka, 37, is trying to make a return to the major leagues as a knuckleballer and will be able to compare notes with R.A. Dickey.

Goedert, a 28-year-old third baseman, spent last season with the Pirates' Class-AAA affiliate in Indianapolis. THE CANADIAN PRESS

MLB

Indians, Axford agree to terms

Canadian free agent John Axford, who had 46 saves for Milwaukee in 2011 but has struggled the past two seasons, has agreed to terms on a contract with the Cleveland Indians, pending a physical.

Axford, from Simcoe, Ont., is expected to undergo a medical exam early this week.

If there are no issues, Axford will close for the Indians in 2014, replacing Chris Perez, who was released on Oct. 31.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bruins' Lucic left fuming after nightclub attacks

NHL. Boston forward fed up with hometown following two assaults

Boston Bruins forward Milan Lucic says he's "done trying to defend" his hometown of Vancouver after he claims he was punched twice at a nightclub.

"Other than being at Rogers Arena, no one will ever see me in downtown Vancouver ever again," Lucic said on Monday.

A video released on the Internet shows Lucic in an altercation with an unknown person in front of Vancouver police. No punches are thrown in the video.

Lucic and the Boston Bruins were in Vancouver for a game on Saturday. The Canucks won the game 6-2.

Some Christmas punch?

"I have no reason left to try and defend my city and the people of my city."

Bruins forward Milan Lucic reacts to two separate attacks following Saturday's road game against the Canucks.

Lucic told Boston reporters that the incident took place after the game and he was punched twice — once inside the club and once outside.

Lucic has had problems in his hometown before. Last year, a Serbian Orthodox church in Burnaby connected to Lucic's family was vandalized.

Lucic also claims his grandparents have been harassed at Rogers Arena.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
There are times when it is right to back down but this isn't one of them. If you find yourself under attack today, stand up and fight back. Don't be intimidated by noise makers.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
You may feel compelled to accept what is offered but if you are not happy with the terms, speak up or there will be trouble further down the line. You are not being selfish by holding out for more.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
The full moon in your sign suggests at least one challenge is heading your way and it is important that you face up to it. Don't let anyone bully you.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
Do others have your best interests at heart? Why leave it to chance? Money matters and business issues are a minefield, so tread carefully and make sure you are not being cheated.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
You may be brave by nature but taking risks is best avoided today, especially on the home front where loved ones are unlikely to see the funny side of your pranks — and even less if they have to come and rescue you.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Someone will be aggressive towards you today. What have you done to deserve being treated harshly? Probably nothing but they may see it as getting you back for something you previously did. Let it pass.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You can be persuasive at times but don't go too far and demand that people change their views. Communication is about the exchange of ideas, not forcing your ideas on those who clearly don't want them.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Someone will give you a hard time today and you are not the sort to back down. However, if you find yourself battling someone in a position of power, don't take it too far.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
If you know what is good for you, keep a low profile over the next 24 hours. A full moon in your opposite sign means you will encounter people who rub you the wrong way. You don't have to interact with them.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Don't waste your time arguing about something that is trivial. If you find yourself losing your temper with someone who refuses to see sense, just turn your back and walk away.

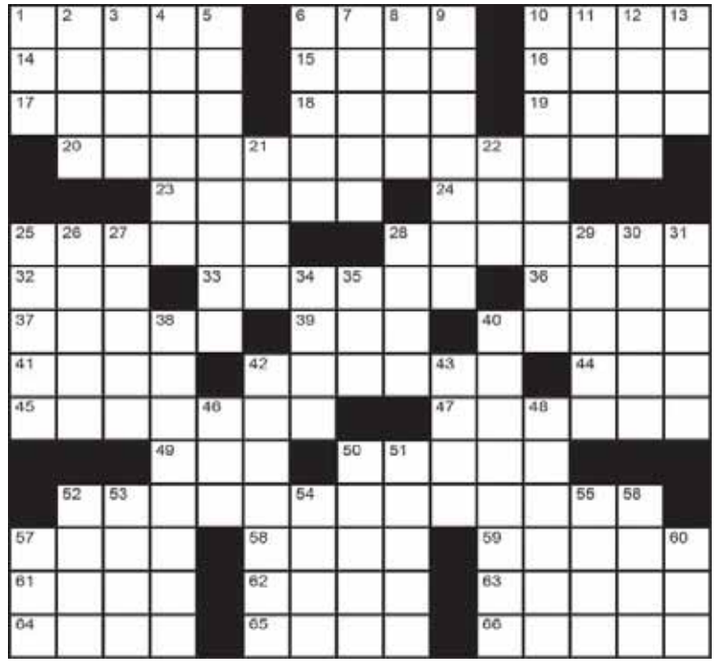
♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Today's full moon indicates that your differences with a certain person are too strong to pretend they do not exist. If a parting of the ways is necessary so be it. You'll be better off.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Accidents will happen but that does not mean they have to happen to you. If you look for adventure, you will find it. It may be fun to begin with but later on it will be you who slips and falls. SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



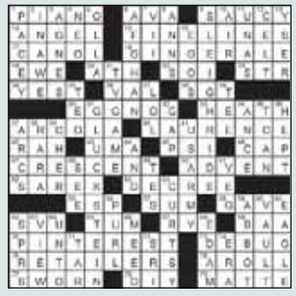
Across

1. "That's great!": 2 wds.
6. Catch
10. Cheerios uniform letters on FOX's "Glee"
14. John __ (Tractor company)
15. Breadbasket item
16. Prefix with 'tude' (Elevation)
17. Opera highlights
18. Be goofy, __ _ fool
19. Canuck coffee spot, to regulars
20. Members of this intergovernmental forum include Canada and Iceland: 2 wds.
23. Without a __ __ stand on
24. "What??"
25. "Psst!" from above: 2 wds.
28. Maple Leafs great Doug
32. Society notice word
33. "We Three Kings of __ Are"
36. Feminizing suffix
37. Paw parts
39. Canuck motorists org.
40. "And now, the __ __..." - Paul Anka, "My Way"
41. __ Space Museum of Calgary
42. Jeff __, Animal Planet host
44. Hot season in Hull
45. Surname of the Prime Minister who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1957
47. __ _ __ (How dishes are often sold)
49. Critical
50. Twin brother of Romulus in Roman†mythology
52. Reason for some animal extinctions: 3 wds.
57. KISS ballad
58. Shoe parts
59. Stanley of "Julie & Julia" (2009)
61. Not fooled by: 2 wds.
62. Fort __, ON
63. 1911 Edith Wharton novel, __ Frome
64. On
65. Mail
66. __ __ evil, hear...

Down

1. Harem room
2. Wife of Zeus
3. Skating great Johnny
4. Prophet
5. Mythical setting of HBO's "Game of Thrones"
6. Land stretch
7. Celebrity chef Mr. DiSpirito
8. Sax sort
9. Acclaim
10. "Stereo" band from Winnipeg, The __
11. Nero's 1052
12. WWW code
13. "__-boom-bah!"
21. Disney CEO, Bob __
22. Void, in Paris
25. Open the bottle
26. Point __ (Canada mainland's most southerly tip)
27. Supremes' "I __ _ Symphony"
28. Chew
29. Waves: French
30. Join
31. Adjust anew
34. Picture
35. Hearer
38. North Pole: Santa's __
40. Master bedroom must-haves
42. Phoenix players
43. Shakespeare's foot?
46. French possessive
48. Shrewd
50. River of Germany
51. Facilitated
52. Temporarily gave
53. Director Mr. Preminger
54. Fairway warning!
55. Be sore
56. Coast-to-coast road, famously
57. Designer gown accessory
60. She gave Odysseus a veil

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

Yesterday's Sudoku

	5						6	
		8				9		
1	7		9	3	5		2	4
	3		1		9		8	
2								1
	1		5		2		9	
5	2		8	7	4		3	9
		3				1		
	6						7	

Today
-4°/-7°
Flurries
40%

Wednesday
-3°/-4°
Variable

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